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THE
CURE of DEISM:
OR, THE
Mediatorial Scheme
BY
JESUS CHRIST
THE ONLY TRUE RELIGION.

In ANSWER to the OBJECTIONS started,
and to the very imperfect Account of *The Religion of*
NATURE, and of CHRISTIANITY, given
by the Two Oracles of DEISM; the AUTHOR of
Christianity as old as the Creation; and the AUTHOR
of the *Characteristics*.

In TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

In a NEW METHOD.

By a Country CLERGYMAN. *Eliza Smith.*

*I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it.
Ye believe in GOD, believe also in ME.*

L O N D O N:

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M DCC XXXVI.

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CLUB OF D.E.S.M.

To the Right Reverend
Father in God
The Lord Bishop of London
THE ONLY TRUE RELIGION



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Though the A.V.O. (the name)
might slightly differ from
plications. The New Man
your London. The name of the
Present from (James) Chapman Obit.
region of interest. A word extracted in the
instance of your own. The name of the
fully representing. The name of the
Model, and have down the name of the
Architect. And the name of the
Hollow'd by the name of the
perished, they will be to the name of the
the Beauty, strength and solidity of their
Labour.



To the Right Reverend
Father in God, EDMUND,
Lord Bishop of London.

My LORD,



THE *Introduction* to the following Scheme of true Religion, publishes the *peculiar* Reason of this Address to your Lordship, where it shews from whom the Plan of it is taken: Though the Author (had he set his Name) might alledge the usual Motive of these Applications, viz. the Receipt of Favours from your Lordship, he begs Acceptance of the Present from a superior and particular Obligation of inscribing a Work executed in Pursuance of your own general Direction; gratefully remembring that he, who gives the Model, and lays down the Plan, is the *Chief* Architect: And the more assiduously it is follow'd by more able Under-Builders, I am persuaded, they will be so just as to impute the Beauty, Strength and Solidity of their

DEDICATION.

Labour to your *Lordship's* Advice and Superintendency, as a judicious and faithful *Overseer* of the Building of the Household of God, built upon the only Foundation of eternal Life, as it is received and copy'd from Heaven. And I am abundantly convinced the more your *Lordship's* Model of representing Christianity in, and through its glorious *Mediator*, is consider'd by Christians in general, and study'd by its Clergy in particular, it will more and more appear to be founded in the *Nature and Reason of Things*, as well as in the *Revelation* from Heaven; and for that Reason, to be without Controversy, and to the Prevention of Controversy, the sole best Method both for convincing, and reclaiming Gainsayers; and for establishing all Christians in the Knowledge and Possession of the Truth.

MAY your *Lordship* long continue an adequate Advancer of the Kingdom of *God* and *Christ*, in its Truth and Purpose, Laws and Practice; and may you very long live an Ornament to that Religion you have so well defended, is the cordial Wish of the *Author*, and of every good Christian.



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T H E

INTRODUCTION.

THE Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* introduces his Book, declaring, ‘ The Subject he writes upon is of the last Importance, and makes no Apology for writing upon it, but writing so late.’ I readily agree with him in the vast Importance of the Subject; and, after so many Answers, the Publick may justly expect some Apology for my writing so late.

THE true State of the Case is this: The Author of the following Sheets living at a great Distance from *London*, and not able to purchase many Books, had never, till very lately, read either of the Authors he replies to. Upon a *particular* Occasion, he was favour’d with the Loan of one of the Answers to the first Author, by a neighbouring Clergyman; which so awaken’d his Curiosity, as to make Interest with other Neigh-

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bours to borrow the two Authors he has taken under Consideration, and all the Replies to them he could procure; and it has been his good Fortune to have seen most, he may add all of any Character, by the Report of others.

NOTWITHSTANDING those Answers, which have their several Value and Use; the Author of the following is of Opinion, that an Attempt to cure *Deism* effectually, can never be too late, but is particularly seasonable in an Age so lamentably infected with it, according to the universal Complaint and Concern of all Christians from all Quarters, as *the Sin* of the Age, productive of many others: nor too carefully adapted to Persons, so *seemingly* studious of the Nature of Things, and the Force of Arguments, industriously at the same time lying upon the catch, to collect and expose all weak ones in Defence of Christianity. He is so far in the Belief of *modern Deists*, as to regard the *Two Authors* he replies to, as the chief Bulwarks, or rather the *Old and New Testament* of their little Faith, I meant to say, their small Reason: Who being dead, yet speak, as the Two Oracles of all their Sentiments. As such, they can't be displeased that I have quoted them as justly, and argued as fairly, as they ought to do with respect to the Scriptures of the Christians. And, as they so very well know and hug themselves in the victorious Certainty of all that
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can be alledg'd in Defence of their Opinion, by those mighty Champions, laborious in the Scheme, and perfect Masters of the same, they can no longer offer an Excuse for suspending their Judgment; that they are, or can *now* be ignorant of ALL that can be said for their Cause. They are sure no After-Argument can arise, that can exceed what has been urg'd by them; with great Confidence and Satisfaction therefore, they retire, one and all, under that Standard, where is the Collection of all their Forces.

NOTWITHSTANDING they are such great Writers, in the Opinion of their Admirers and Followers, I have the Candor to think they are not enslaved to *their* Authority, with the same blind Attachment the *Jews* are to their *Rabbies*, the sole invincible Chain, that binds the *common* inferior *Jews* from embracing Christianity.

ARE those then the Leaders, are these the Writings indeed which have bewitch'd and deceiv'd, have harangu'd and confounded so many, almost out of the due Use and true Benefit of Reason, making its Enquiry, as they are supposed to do, after true Religion? Are these the choicest Arguments, the strongest Forces that can be marshall'd for about 30 Years together, and from Contributions lifted from all Parts, since the famous Era of the *Rights of the Church*, against the Religion they have been baptized into? Are the joint Endeavours of these two, the

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utmost Efforts, the all sufficient confiding Grounds of *Deism*, for recommending it as the *true Religion*, and rejecting Christianity?

BUT what if the ensuing Scheme shall make it appear in a Method different from all other Answers, That true Religion is only to be sought, and found, in the *true Nature*, and *present Constitution* of Things; discoverable in Part, from their visible Frame and Adjustment; and further discover'd according to Man's Occasions, and the Counsels of Divine Wisdom, by *Revelation*, from their great Author and Founder. Neither is this any begging of Questions, if it appears at the same time, to the full Satisfaction of their Enquiry into the *true Nature of God*, and the *true Nature of Man*, in his present Condition, That those Discoveries in the Christian Revelation do actually give in the most reasonable, solid, and undeniable true Account of the NATURE of both: From the Knowledge of which Account, results the perfecter Discovery of the true Religion of Man, in the Need and Necessity of *some* Mediator between God and Man; at the same time, the Revelation shews, who is that *one, only true* MEDIATOR.

BEFORE whose Advent in the Flesh, the Necessity of *some* Mediator was confessed and proclaim'd by the common Voice of Mankind, over the Face of the whole Earth. From one common Apprehension as clear as that

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that of the Existence of God, all the World united in the fundamental Sense of the Perfection, Purity, and Holiness of *his* Nature; and no less of the conscious Sinfulness cleaving to, and discomposing that of *Man*. The universal Conscience and Persuasion of the infallible Certainty of each of those Truths, humbled them into some proper Distance from God, but threw them, (without due Advice of their Reason,) wheresoever the *primæval Promise* of the true, appointed Mediator was lost in their Generations, into a wrong Choice, and worse Dependance upon worthless Mediators of their own setting up, for gaining the desired Access and Acceptance with their God, through the Merit, as they imagined, of Sacrifice and Ceremonies: Hence the wide-spreading *Idolatry* of the World. And in due time the remedial Gospel appear'd to fulfil the *Promise*, to recover the Notion, to fix the Faith of the one true Mediator; and to destroy those Works of the Devil which brought in so many false Mediators of the Worship of the true God. A Worship! which of Course, being immoral in its Principle, let in all Immorality like a Floodgate; and by viewing God through such a faulty discolour'd Medium, multiplied, and so lost the Knowledge of him.

IF then it is certain, that before the coming of *Christ* there never was any Religion without a Mediator, nor never can be any *true* Religion, in the present degenerate State

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of Mankind, without the *true* Mediator appointed of *God*, between God and Man, implicitly, or expressly adher'd to; and if in the Sequel, the MEDIATORIAL SCHEME, *God in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, appears to be the only fix'd Center, that affords the true Knowledge of God, and of Man; wherein all the moral governing Perfections of the former, in innumerable Instances, of giving, and forgiving Goodness, meet, salute, and are very propitious to the State and Condition of the latter; if this is the only Medium in the World that completely connects and conciliates the governing Attributes of God, to the moral Powers, and conscious Imperfections of Man; and if above all Things this consults moreover the *Glory and Honour* of God, in representing him most amiable, and yet most awful, in every respect; and no less consults and provides for the *Good* of Men, in raising their Hopes to Assurance of Acceptance, dispelling Fears, and preventing any Presumption at the same time; it is humbly hoped that this Scheme, appealing as it does to the Deist's own *Criterion of true Religion*, will be admitted to put in its Plea as such. And if *Jesus Christ*, in the Nature of Things as reveal'd in Scripture, and set forth in this Scheme, is likewise found to be the *best fitted*, and the *sole accomplish'd* Mediator for effecting and perfecting these Things, then it must be granted, that he is the very Archetype

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chetype, the *αὐτοπαύρο* of a true perfect Reconciliation between God and Man; then is his the *only* true Religion in the World.

AND in an Enquiry of so great a Moment, every open Deist, and every secret Favourer of their Opinion, is most seriously and affectionately intreated to take *these Oracles* of Deism once more into their Hands, and revise and compare them carefully with this Answer, and judge impartially.

AND if this important Religion has so intimate a Connexion with the Religion of Nature, as to be the greatest Perfecter of it; and affords the *only* Means, Aids, Motives, and Helps for performing it; and, if in shewing this admirable harmonious Connexion of Christianity with Natural Religion, in a *new Light*, unconsider'd perhaps as yet by any *Deist*, a clear View and Prospect opens for discovering the TRUE *Obligations*, and *Foundation* of MORALITY. For there can be no doubt, in case the Religion of this Mediator is the only true Religion, that the true Grounds of Morality must be drawn from its Source, and *Fountain Head* only, as I have clearly shewn. Nor can there be any Morality or natural Religion with respect to another World, besides, or without *this Foundation* of God's being a *Rewarder*: Every other nominal Morality, without this sacred, this its own proper Obligation first laid, being none other than *Civil*, or *Politi-*

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tick Institution of Morality, upon the *Epicurean* Scheme of Virtue being the Way and Means of attaining the highest Felicity of Man in *this Life*; but acting without the Belief of Providence, regardless of future Rewards and Punishments, has nothing of the *Religion* of Morality in it, and therefore can never deserve the Name of natural Religion.

IN a Question therefore of so great Dignity and Moment, as *what is the only true Religion*? it is earnestly intreated for their own Sake, as well as for the Honour of human Reason, that all Persons of their Sentiments, whether they own, or decline the Name of *Deist*, will be so candid, as to favour this Aspect of Christianity with their Perusal.

THE *Deists* I have to do with, are indeed so candid, as to declare, 1. What will not convince. 2. What will satisfy them, as to the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion. And I have all along had that particular Regard to their Declaration, as the latest that comes from them, after abundance of disputing, and a Multitude of Books, as to confine myself to that wherein they say, they only seek Satisfaction. There is but one *Postulatum* in the Way; in order to open the Scene, I was obliged to begin with one Supposition, *i. e. that Man was once in a State of Innocence*; and was soon after, and has been ever since in a fallen degenerate Condition;

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Condition; though even that continues a Supposition but for a very few Pages, before I actually demonstrate, that it must have been so, from two self-evident Propositions: That being once proved, all the rest follows in a Chain.

At the same Time the two Authors, to whom I reply, and have evidently shewn to be grossly mistaken in the true Nature of Things, and the Force of Argument, positively declare what will not convince them with respect to the Christian Revelation, they plainly intimate what *will*. The noble Author of *Characteristicks*, first in Date, and longest in Vogue, has several Flings at *Miracles* as good-for-nothing Proofs; though it must be acknowledged a greater Miracle than all that are reported in the *Jewish* or *Christian* Institutes; that either of those Religions, opposing the reigning darling Vices of Mankind, should be received in the World, without *Miracles* to introduce them at the first: But in a Tract published afterwards, speaks more openly. 'Let it be your chief Endeavour to make Acquaintance with what is *Good*; that by seeing perfectly, by the Help of Reason, what is *Good*, and what *Ill*; you may prove whether that, which is from Revelation, be not perfectly good and conformable to this Standard. For if so, the very End of the Gospel proves it Truth. And that, which to the Vulgar is only proveable by Miracles, and

teachable

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' teachable by positive Precepts and Com-
 ' mands, to the wise and virtuous is demon-
 ' strated by the Nature of the Thing. So
 ' that how can we forbear to give our As-
 ' sent to those Doctrines, and that Revelation
 ' which is deliver'd to us, and enforced by
 ' Miracles and Wonders? But to *us*, the very
 ' Test and Proof of the Divineness and Truth
 ' of that Revelation, is from the *Excellence*
 ' of the *Things* revealed: otherwise the
 ' Wonders themselves would have little
 ' Effect or Power; nor could they be tho-
 ' roughly depended on, were we even as
 ' near to them, as those who lived a Thou-
 ' sand Years since; when they were freshly
 ' wrought, and strong in the Memory of
 ' Men.*

BEFORE I leave this Author, who has
 led the Van of modern Deism for many
 Years, and is, perhaps, the subtlest Adver-
 sary that ever wrote against Christianity; I
 would observe that his pernicious Design is
 so deeply and artfully laid, as to be under-
 stood only by the *initiated*; and commonly
 mistaken, nay, sometimes applauded, by
 very honest Christians. Being thorough
 Master of his own Scheme, he begins his
 Sap at Christianity, by undermining natural
 Religion. He imperceptibly betrays Virtue
 under an insinuating Appearance of fawning
 Love and Friendship for it, and carries on the
 Attack

* Several Letters by a N. Lord to a young Man at the Uni-
 versity, pag. 32.

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Attack the more successfully under the Cover of two popular Sentiments, to both of which I have allowed all the true Sense, and Religion that can belong to them. 1. *Affection for the Publick.* 2. The Love of Virtue *for Virtues Sake*; and, at the same Time, vilifies future Rewards and Punishments, throwing them out of his Scheme; though they actually, and perpetually are the vital Reasons and Obligations of all true Morality, as it is *Religion*; and so by subverting the *real* Foundation, effectually destroys the *Thing* Virtue, and leaves nothing but the Name.

I HAVE also detected his other ill Designs against Christianity, in other Parts of his Writings, and offer'd the proper Remedy.

THE Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* likewise enters his Protest against any Eviction from *Miracles*, and condescends, at the same Time, to set forth, what it is that must satisfy him and his Disciples. Besides ridiculing them¹, he declares, 'Without judging Religion by its *internal Marks* there is nothing but Miracles to plead; and Miracles true or false, if they are believed, (and where are they not?) will have the same Effect; Nay, if Miracles can be perform'd by Evil, as well as by good Beings, the worst Religion may have most Miracles, as exceeding them most².' Would not Christians themselves think it sufficient Proof
of

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‘ of a Religion’s not coming from God, if
‘ it wanted any of those *internal Marks*, by
‘ which the Truth of all Religion is to be
‘ tried, without enquiring into its Miracles
‘ or any other external Proof : ‘ The Good
‘ of Mankind is the Test, the Criterion or
‘ *internal Evidence*, by which we are to
‘ judge : ‘

AND as this is an Age that will acquiesce,
and be govern’d by nothing but Enquiries
into the NATURE OF THINGS, I am
willing to take all the Disciples of these two
great Masters at the Word of their Principals.
And, in order to oblige them as far as I can,
in relieving their Complaints, that Nobody
has shewn them, and they cannot of them-
selves perceive the *Reasons*, the *Excellency*,
the *internal Evidence* of the three *Positives*
of Christianity which they stick at ; and
whereon they find such Stress is laid, that
there is no Christianity without them, *viz.*
the Use and Benefit of a *Mediator*, and the
Use and Benefit of the *two Sacraments* in-
stituted by him. These, say they, the Chri-
stians call *Mysteries*, and they keep them so,
for any thing we can learn by them, or con-
cerning them, worthy of God to appoint,
or engaging of that great Good, the Salva-
tion of Man, to embrace and comply with.
They seem to be unanimously of this Opi-
nion.

SHew

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' SHEW us once plainly and particularly
 ' even with the Help of your Revelation,
 ' that *intrinsic Evidence, Fitness, &c.* of
 ' those Things, which you have so long and
 ' so often declined, and we will become the
 ' Christians you desire us, and no longer
 ' think meanly and slightly of, or any more
 ' look upon that Religion with Indifference
 ' or Contempt. We will never after that,
 ' repeat our Cavils against the *Miracles* ;
 ' much less the *Prophecies* and their Accom-
 ' plishment, which it boasts of ; we will as
 ' readily grant the *Record* of it, as *such*, to
 ' be as genuinely and authentickly convey'd
 ' down in all its original Design, as *Xeno-*
 ' *phon's* memorable Things of *Socrates* in
 ' its Design ; who declares almost every
 ' Thing upon the Evidence of what he had
 ' seen, and heard himself ; and that there is
 ' as much Harmony in the *Evangelists*, as
 ' in *Xenophon* and *Plato*, relating the Deeds
 ' and Discourses of their Master. We will
 ' drop the Pretence of the *Enthusiasm* of
 ' the first Christians ; the *Fate* and *Necessity*
 ' of Human Actions ; our Fleers at *some*
 ' Explanations of the Doctrine of the Tri-
 ' nity ; our *satyrical Strokes* likewise for
 ' depreciating, by making all Priests alike ;
 ' the late amusing *Fable* for confounding
 ' Good and Evil ; the *Philosopher's Prayer* ;
 ' and the Design of publishing the *second*
 ' Part of *Christianity as old, &c.* having,
 ' in Truth, spent all our Forces in the *first*
 ' Volume.

' See *Bee*, N°. 118.

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' Volume. All these we will immediate-
 ' ly call in, and put a Stop to : for
 ' every one of them, in their Turns, were
 ' directed to nothing else, but to keep up
 ' and increase the Spirit of Dislike and
 ' Opposition, and to bait and teaze the Chri-
 ' stians with, till they vouchsafe to come to
 ' the *Point*; and afford us that Evidence we
 ' are in Quest of, and they have been so very
 ' sparing in. Let them once produce the
 ' *internal* Marks of the *Goodness* of those
 ' Things; it will render their external Notes
 ' and Proofs of the Truth superfluous to us :
 ' Give us their *intrinsick Evidence* and *Ex-*
 ' *cellence*, according to the *true Nature* of
 ' *Things*, if it is discover'd by their Reve-
 ' lation, and if it is true what is said of it,
 ' that the Christian Revelation has discover'd
 ' the *Goodness*, as well as the Truth of all
 ' Things pertaining to Life and Godliness ;
 ' Christians may then not only pretend, but
 ' prevail in making Profelytes of us ; feed us
 ' with Reason, as well as Faith, in those
 ' Things, and we will return to the Fold of
 ' the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls ;
 ' as many of us as do indeed prefer Truth to
 ' Falshood, Safety to Hazard, and a Life of
 ' Reason and Order, before the ignoble and
 ' irregular Gratifications either of Sense, or
 ' of Spirit.

' SHEW us our natural Religion, which
 ' we so justly value and love even to a Je-
 ' lousy, render'd more practicable to the
 ' Conduct

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Conduct and Comfort of human Capacity, by *Jesus Christ*; by *Faith* and *Mystery*, by his multiply'd *Means*, *Aids*, *Motives*, *Helps*; then you may justly call the Sincerity of our Pretensions to *that* natural Religion in Question, if we any longer neglect to embrace him, and with him, and through him, the best Ways and Means in the World, to the best End in the World. After you have fully reliev'd our Queries, with respect to these principal *Desiderata*; and our Curiosity as to Christ appearing no sooner; and fairly satisfy'd our Minds, which will be satisfy'd with nothing but the *Reason of Things* in Matters of Duty perpetually obligatory to a rational Agent, we shall be ready to own, nay, you will force us to confess another Sort of Meaning; and from our inward Sentiments acknowledge, that there is indeed a savoury Sense, and a saving Use in Christianity: And even join you in extolling the Wisdom and Favour, and admiring the Divine Beauty and Excellency of that Institution. And if any after that continue DEISTS, in a Christian, especially in any *Protestant* Country, you may take it for granted, and you shall have us for Witnesses against them, that their Boast of Virtue, and the Religion of Nature, is in Reality, what it has been generally reckon'd, *viz.* as to its Pretence Hypocrisy; as to its Performance impracticable; and as to its Hopes desperate.

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To oblige, I say, so large a Number of distinguish'd Opposers in their importunate, and not unreasonable Demand, I have disposed the following Sheets into a View of giving them the Satisfaction they are so desirous of; and, as I go along, both candidly cite, and answer their Objections, in Hopes to take away all Excuse from future Infidelity. That, in Case *Deism* should hereafter appear in a *Protestant* Country, it may appear in its proper Colours, to be the Result and Consultation not of Virtue and Morality, but of Wilfulness and Wickedness; not of Reason and sincere Enquiry, but of Art and Design; or the prevailing Success of the secret Artifices of *Popery*.

To attain this valuable End in a perspicuous Method, I have thrown the View of Religion into the most clear Prospect of *Ends* and *Means*; by the Help of which, every Thing appears in its true Proportion; every Thing falls into Order, and ranges itself into the proper Place and Precedence, Dignity and Importance, Use and Design, which God and the Nature of Things have allotted to them: The Difference and Value for every Precept, the Zeal and Moderation for any Parts of Religion, (though they are of a seeming equal Obligation, by being indiscriminately commanded,) appear by this Light in their distinct Degrees and Sizes: Whilst FAITH in the *Mediator* will no less gloriously, than conspicuously, present
itself

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itself in its Divine Station, fully informing us of all Things proper for us to know, and do; in order to influence, enliven, and effectuate every Thing in Morality and Religion. And, if we will join it with our own Endeavours, it offers to lift us fallen and impotent up to Heaven, and after raising to sufficient, itinerant Joy, from conscious Fear and Guilt, state us there in our highest Happiness. That in the *Face* or Person of *Jesus Christ*, as in a Mirror, we may all *with open Face behold the Honour and Glory of God*, in the Illustration of all his Perfections, the *Peace of God on Earth*, and *Good Will towards Men*, in the Relief of all their Wants, and the Addition of all the Benefits they are either capable of wishing, or enjoying.

LIKE all the Works of God, so wonderful is the Divine Symetry, so exceeding admirable and exact the Adjustment and Reconciliation of the Powers of changeable peccant Mortals to the never changing Attributes of God, by this *Medium*! Oh! that this imperfect, unpractised Pen could represent the hundredth Part of the adorable Wisdom, Goodness, and Beauty of this *Mediatorial Scheme*, it would every where be acknowledged to be as much beyond the Possibility of any human Invention, as it is above human Desert; and there would not be a *modern Deist* to be found of any Pretence to

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any Religion, but would fall down and worship, in the Christian Sense, his *Father* in Heaven, for so much Love in sending his Son into the World for the Salvation and Redemption thereof.

AND as this Connexion of Means and Ends, such as it is, is carry'd on in a Series to the Conclusion, as a regular Scheme ought to be, it is so much the more reasonable Request to the Reader, not to make a Judgment of any Part till he has perus'd the Whole; and when he thinks of Judgment, not to forget Mercy and proper Allowance to the first Essay that I know of, in this Kind. Perhaps, by the Way, some true Apprehensions may be settled, many Doubts relieved, and not a few Fears remov'd with respect to some important Things in Religion.

AND if the *true* Notion and Account of *Idolatry* is likewise laid down, the *Papist* will never be able to acquit himself of the Charge of it, without a Reformation. It is a melancholy Reflection, yet, What good Christian can help making it? That two the grossest Absurdities in the World, *POPERY* and *DEISM*, should make a Progress in a learned, Protestant Country, the Bulwark of the Reformation, and of every valuable Liberty. But wherever *Deism* increases, the other opportunely enlarges its destructive Views, and facilitates its pestilent Purposes; because, in serious sad Truth, they naturally and readily produce

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produce each other by the Elasticity of their initiate Principles, as I have evidently shewn.

THAT God should be in Christ reconciling the World to himself; and that Man should be taken into him, becoming the Son of Man in an extraordinary inconceivable Manner, as he was before Son of God, gives an Idea of the most impartial, compleat, adequate MEDIATOR, that can ever be thought of either by God, or Man; perfectly well agreeing with the Reason and Nature of Things, as it does with the Scriptures revealing them.

FOR this Cause, St. John very justly appeals, *He that believeth that Jesus [the Son of Man] is also the Son of God, HAS THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF;* provided he does but take it into the Consideration of his reasoning Mind, his Mind subscribes to the intrinsic Reasonableness, and is entirely satisfy'd in the Wisdom of such a Mediator in all the Aspects, in every Respect of God, and of Man; being so admirably founded in the Nature of Things, for completing the Reconciliation of Man to God, and God to Man, and bringing with it the most munificent intended Gift of God, *eternal Life*; which Life being in his Son, and given of God by him, is called *the Record that God gave of his Son*; (the greatest Record of an entire Reconciliation, most undoubtedly, in all the World;) and *he that believeth it not*, [being so very reasonable and

b 2

advanta-

¹ Vol. II. 211, 233. See Vol. I. 113, 251. how very well they agree together.

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advantageous in itself] maketh God a Liar, to be neither good, holy, just, or wise; and Jesus to be no Advocate or Mediator.

THE Apostle 1 John v. 20. says, *we know the Son of God is come, and has given us an Understanding, that we may know him that is TRUE: and we are in him that is TRUE, even in his Son Jesus Christ.* Admitting *ἐκ μόνου* to refer to *παράκλητον*, Chap. ii. 1. preceding (which, I think, carries so plain and obvious a Connexion in the Apostle's Argument, that it must be admitted, as meaning the true Advocate or Mediator) his Conclusion is admirably strong and exactly beautiful; *this is true God, and eternal Life; little Children keep yourselves from Idols. Because IDOLATRY, the Thing dissuaded from, consists in applying to false Advocates and Mediators, in Opposition, Neglect, or Ignorance of Jesus Christ, the one, only true Mediator.*

NEITHER is the Divine Wisdom and Prudence in appointing this *only* Mediator in Exclusion of all others, designed in the least, to *inform* God of the State and Condition of Man, or *put him in Mind* of any of his Wants, or Miseries, as if he was wanting in *Disposition* to redress and save; but to give Life to the forlorn State of his unpractis'd Repentance, to direct and conduct his Prayers, and recover him to Access and Intercourse with God in a *manner* becoming,

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coming, and through a *Medium* both adorning and softening the tremendous Majesty and Holiness of his Nature. How immediately and effectually does this Method convince Man of his own great Worthlessness by reason of his own manifold Sins, and of the great Odiousness of the same to God; and upon due Consideration, demonstrates that there can be no Approach to his pure spotless Nature, or any Forgiveness of Sin, in any other Method comparable to this?

BECAUSE this evinces, that any other Method, or any less Exuberance of Goodness and Mercy to the Sinner, though Goodness and Mercy are never so great in God, would be improvident, must needs be unjust to his other Attributes; as well as give Encouragement to that Disobedience to his Laws, and to that Opposition to his Glory and Designs, in consulting the general Happiness of Mankind, which is infinitely hateful in his Sight.

How clearly does this condescending Method instruct, argue him into, and convince him, if he will think at all, of the *true Nature* both of God, and Man? Of Man's great Ignorance of himself, at the same Time, of his necessary Dependance upon his Creator for the Knowledge of the true Way to his Favour; and of the best Means to his own Felicity; and of the ruinous Folly of conceited, independent, Sufficiency in pretending to an happy State, or to provide for himself, in Con-

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tempt of the Directions and Qualifications of the *Wisdom from above*, the Declarations and Conditions, which God (who made him in Innocence for Happiness, and would save him fallen into Sin, from himself enslaved to that, and Error, to *greater Happiness*) has graciously made known unto him?

FOR those Declarations are made known in the Way of *Covenant*, binding even God himself, and upon moderated Conditions, put into the Power of Man, under all his Frailty, to fulfil; and if *Jesus Christ*, who is *Man* as well as God, is the *Mediator* of that Covenant, and sees to the Performance, on *both Sides*; can there be any Security for Man's Happiness; Can there be any Alacrity to his careful Endeavours after it, to be thought of, to be named, to be compared to this righteously wise, this mercifully holy, this easy condescending Dispensation? — But I forbear; — an Introduction should not anticipate.

THE *Assurance* of Remission of Sins, and the Favour of God, considering how many Sins in Number, and of that Number not a few heinous in Degree of Iniquity, Men are foolishly guilty of against the Checks of their own Conscience; and at the same Time conscious, that their future Happiness, or Misery, most certainly depends upon their being forgiven, or not forgiven, is a Matter of the greatest Comfort and Importance, in the whole World, to every Man living;

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livings, inasmuch as *well-being* in his principal Stage of Duration, is of infinitely greater Consequence than single Being, and mere Duration. It is a Dispensation of the most exquisite Wisdom, and in its several Parts and Branches of the most inestimable Beneficence of Goodness, and Beauty of Righteousness; that he who gave us Life and Reason, should condescend to engage himself in *Covenant*, to assure the Mind of Man by *Contract* and *Conveyance* of *Right*, of the Happiness of that Life in its everlasting State; upon Condition of obeying a reasonable Law suited to our rational Nature, using that Liberty he has given us according to the Direction of the Reason he first gave us, and again renew'd and reinforced upon us.

CHRISTIANITY, the *new* or *second Covenant*, being nothing else in its Revelation, (as is clearly demonstrated in the following Pages) but *superior extraordinary* Reason explicitly superadded to the *common* Reason given unto Man, which is that *first* or *old Covenant*, consciously obliging every one to an *universal* Obedience to the Law of *Works*, according to the plain Dictates of that cultivated Reason; superadded, I say, for the Relief of all the Misadventures, and Redemption of every Misfortune incurr'd by Man, in the State of his bounden Obedience to that Law of the first Covenant. And as every Man living is conscious of his failings, in disobeying that Law, yet firmly persuaded likewise

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likewise of the Goodness of God to forgive him in *some* Manner, whoever, according to the Creed of Nature, believes him a *Rewarder of those that diligently seek him*; the unavoidable Transgression of that Law in Fact, and the infallible Holiness and Goodness of God in Theory, in a Manner discloses, and with the least Hint of Revelation, infers the Law of *Faith*, *i. e.* the *second Covenant*, or *Gospel of the Mediator*; and as well supposes the common Benefit of it to those who do not explicitly know it, as it deservedly excludes those from the Grace thereof, who knowingly reject it, and its Mediator.

YET, alas! so it is; ever since Sir *Isaac Newton* has banish'd the *open* Profession of *Atheism* by his incomparable Demonstration of *God*, and *Order* in the Frame of the Universe, tho' the *Name* has been politickly changed, yet joyning other Streams from the same Fountain of Evil, has occasion'd a prodigious Torrent of *Deism* to overflow this Age: wherein so many think it a Glory to their Names, and an Ornament to their free Spirit to be counted in *that* Profession; not desiring to have it thought, that it was ever said of them, that they ever believed one Word of *Jesus Christ*. An Age! wherein the Notion of *Covenant* and *Mediator* is almost dropp'd in not a few modern Explanations of Christianity; notwithstanding the running Style and Title of *the New Testament* in their

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their Hands, may, and in Truth ought to be translated, **NEW COVENANT**, as is plain in itself, and agreed by the Learned¹. The New Covenant being the Source of God's Promises, as they are the Fountain of all Revelation, how can they, whose Characteristic it is to *bring out of their Treasure Things new and old*, find any other Divine Treasure but the *Old and New Covenant*, fruitful as it is of all Morality and Godliness, of all Edification in Knowledge and Practice, to bring their Things out of? Forasmuch as it is the only certain Standard for rectifying those vague Notions, and fond Theories of the *Goodness* of God, whereon the *modern Deists* erect their unhappy System, and from which they all strive, and always offer to maintain their self-deceiving Arguments, as I have abundantly shewn in the following Pages; and for removing many, if not most Mistakes likewise among Christians. And if bringing them thence would recover the Christian Religion to its primitive Use and Efficacy, Strength and Beauty, the too great Neglect of doing it, must necessarily, in Concurrence with other Causes, draw after it the hastning Decline (without the Vigilance of some to put a Stop at this Crisis) of the true primitive Spirit and Notion, Obligation and Tendency of that most excellent, and above all others, incomparable Religion; according to that judicious Observation of Bishop

Burnet

¹ See Vol. I. 311.

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Burnet in what he calls his favourite Book. The being able to state the right Ground of our Hope, and Terms of Salvation, and having a clear and ready View of the New Covenant in *Jesus*, is of such absolute Necessity, that it is a prophaning of Orders, and defiling the Sanctuary, to bring any into it, who don't rightly understand this Matter in its whole extent.

It is too true, that the Redemption of the World by the *Blood of Christ*, runs at a very low Ebb, among those who are beholden to the Name, without having a true Apprehension, and a real Benefit of the Thing, Christianity. As formerly in natural Religion, the World, through *Wisdom*, knew not God, though the Works of Creation so evidently and undeniably reveal'd him to the Mind of every Man; nevertheless by a false Shew of being wise in an endless Variety of foolish Imaginations, they corrupted and changed the good Knowledge, to Ends and Designs quite contrary to Goodness: They held the Truth in Unrighteousness; they brought into the Religion of the Means all Sorts of Superstition and Idolatry like an Inundation, carrying *Philosophers* down the Stream with the vulgar, and like the vulgar; and with that a Flood of real Irreligion and Immorality. So now, notwithstanding the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, the Mediator of the New Covenant between God and Man; together

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with the End and Purpose, Use and Application of what he has done, and still does for our Salvation, are clearly reveal'd, and particularly set down in Holy Scripture, as plain as Words can make them: And notwithstanding, since that ample Revelation at divers Times, and in different Manners, the Constitution of that Mediator, and of his Religion, might manifestly appear to the present wise Generation, zealously inquisitive after the *only true Religion*, to be founded upon the *exactest Fitness* every way, that Human Reason can possibly proportion to, and adjust by, the *true Nature of Things*, I mean the Nature of *God*, and the Nature of *Man* as now truly and fully discovered to human Understanding, for making an impartial Judgment what is, and must be the only true Religion acceptable to God, and profitable to Man; perfectly suitable to the moral Aspect and Character of the former, as *Holy, Just, and Good*, and no less suitable, whilst it is unspeakably beneficial to the latter, as a *frail, peccant, independent* Creature. Nevertheless, by one ingenious Device or other, either being wise *above what is written*, or *short of what is written*; or not sufficiently considering and appealing likewise to the true *Nature, moral State, and Constitution of Things*, knowable to the Reason of Man; the true Christianity, the most wise and admirable Religion of the *Mediator Jesus Christ*, is very much enervated of late, greatly dissipated and

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and distanc'd from its true Intention; and generally frustrated of its best Effect and Comfort; but always has been rejected by the *Deists* from a Liveliness of Wit, Carelessness of Temper, Want of Reading, and Consideration, according to the Character given by a supposed *Deist* of King *Charles II.*

As to the King's Religion, it was more Deism than Popery; which he owed more to the Liveliness of his Parts, and Carelessness of his Temper, than either to Reading, or much Consideration.

FOR the better remedying and preventing this great Evil, the Charge and Advice of a most judicious Prelate, is particularly wise, and constantly necessary. ' Though it is true, that one End of Christ's coming, was, to correct the false Glosses and Interpretations of the moral Law, and, in Consequence thereof, one End of his instituting a Ministry must be, to prevent the Return of those Abuses, by keeping up in the Minds of Men a true Notion of natural Religion, and a just Sense of their Obligations to the Performance of moral Duties; yet, it is also true, that the *main* End of his coming, was, to establish a *new Covenant* with Mankind, founded upon new Terms and new Promises; to shew us a new way of obtaining Forgiveness of Sins, and Reconciliation to God, and eternal Happiness; and to prescribe Rules of greater Purity and Holiness, by way of greater

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‘ Degrees of Happiness and Glory. These
 ‘ (that is, the several Branches of what we
 ‘ may call the **MEDIATORIAL SCHEME**, with
 ‘ several Duties annex’d to, and resulting
 ‘ from each Branch) are, without doubt,
 ‘ the main Ingredient of the Gospel-State;
 ‘ those by which Christianity stands distin-
 ‘ guish’d from all other Religions, and Chri-
 ‘ stians are rais’d to far higher Hopes, and
 ‘ far greater Degrees of Purity and Perfe-
 ‘ ction.’

IN Pursuance of this Plan the Author of
 these Sheets upon this his late Undertaking,
 judging it the best Inquest that can be propo-
 sed, and the only true Scent that can be
 followed after *true Religion*, has endea-
 voured, at this needful Season, to erect the
Criterion, and display the solid Argument
 for correcting what is false, and establishing
 what is true, in appeal both to Reason,
 and Scripture; which are both in perfect
 Harmony, Concord, and Co-incidence,
 with respect to this true Religion. And so
 close is the Alliance between Natural Reli-
 gion and Christianity, and so strong the Ra-
 tification and Accomplishment, that every
 Argument against the last in its true uncor-
 rupted State, though shifted never so many
 Ways, concludes against the first also; and
 whatever destroys and undermines one, has
 the same Effect upon the other. Forasmuch

as Edmund Bishop of Lincoln Charge at his primary Visita-
 tion, 1717. pag. 13, 14. This Passage reprinted. See the
 great Work of Redemption, *Pref.* pag. 5. Printed for
 Roberts, 1735.

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as Christianity is the sole true Means for bringing the other to Perfection. False Wisdom will ever be forward in shewing its Inconsistency in creating a Misunderstanding between them, with as little real Concern for the End, as for the Means; whilst true Wisdom that comes down from above, will distinguish itself in rightly valuing, and assiduously applying the one to the other.

AND because the *modern Deists* are excessively jealous of, and vehemently oppose every thing that looks like *arbitrary*, or *mere Will* in Religion; rightly enough imagining, that there neither is, nor can be any *Criterion* fix'd for finding out an *arbitrary Will* of God; and that the understanding and unfolding Things of that Nature, has no more to do with human Reason, than Sounds has to do with our Eyes, or Colours with our Ears; it may be justly and generally concluded by all Christians, that Christianity will never appear to *Them* to be that true Religion, or reasonable Service, till its *peculiar, instituted* Parts are shewn to be likewise laid in Reason, and grounded in the Nature of Things, wisely and purposely *appointed* for repairing and fortifying our moral and obedient Powers, to make them more recipient of the Likeness, and Blessing of God.

THIS will incontestably appear with respect to the Two Sacraments, *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*; that they are additional, personal Securities, and Progresses in our Attachment

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tachment to the *Mediator* of the New Co-
 venant; enter'd, and often recogniz'd, for
 the more solemn recruiting *Repentance* and
Prayer, the natural languishing Religion of
 the Means, with all the Vigor and Efficacy,
 Consolation and Zeal, that are requisite for
 carrying on the Religion of the End, or na-
 tural Religion, to due Perfection. For, as
 the Dispensation of the Mediator is granted
 and displayed by way of *Covenant*, some
 external Rites were requisite, some solemn
 Actions became necessary to be required on
 the Part of the *Mediator* of it, both for re-
 ligiously initiating into, and continually
 preserving a religious Communication with
 that Mediator; and for *recognizing* that Co-
 venant, and *remembering* the Mediator of it
 in a solemn Manner, as often as the frail
 Condition of Human Obedience requires:
 How frivolous and thoughtless, without
 the least Ground, or Grievance, are the
 Outcries of those *Opposers* in Conversa-
 tion, and Writing? Unless it is a Grievance
 to be tied too strictly, and in good earnest,
 to perform the Religion of Nature, their
 so much pretended Glory and Boast, by any
 new *acquired* Engagement or Covenant,
 and that often *recognized* and *reflected* upon
 in the most solemn Manner and Season;
 and both morally operating, first binding;
 and then rousing, instigating and obliging
 the insensible Conscience, and the forgetful
 Honour of the Gentleman to be true to his
Promise and *Engagement*, for doing what

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is every way his Interest, as well as Duty to do and perform, with all Sincerity. Besides answering their Objections, the true Notion of those Sacraments may be the more seasonable in the midst of so many different Opinions and Disputes: And if the *Deist* cannot but approve of them in their *true* Use and Purpose, every body else will delight in the same, with the greater Satisfaction to the Reason of his own Mind.

AND if that *Complaint* of increasing, instead of lessening the Number of *Deists* by the *Badness* of some Answers, is punctually endeavour'd to be obviated, by going deeply and thoroughly to the *Root* of the Evil, in the ensuing Treatise; the learned Readers will have the greater Reason to connive at lesser Faults; and if others, perchance, meet with any valuable unheeded Truths, which serve to rectify Misapprehensions and Mistakes both in Natural Religion, and Christianity, to thank God for making the Author (sensible as he is of his own Infirmities) the happy Instrument of putting him in mind of them. To whose Blessing the Perusal of what follows is committed.

THE Edition of *Christianity as old, &c.* refer'd to is 8vo. 1739.

Instead of a Catalogue of their Names, the few Subscribers are desired to accept of Thanks for their Encouragement.

C H A P.



CHAP. I.

The Religion of the END.

THE Existence of God being granted, the first Question is, What is *Religion*? The Force and Power of *Religio*,¹ whence it derives, imports a *strong Obligation*, which the Author of our Being has bound upon us; and which we tie and bind the faster upon our own Observance, by taking it upon ourselves, as we grow up to Years of Discretion; and growing more and more sensible of its obliging Power, and of the Reasonableness of our Compliance, it becomes a mutual Kind of Covenant. To know the Original of the Reli-

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¹ *Religionis nomen a religando, & a vinculo pietatis esse deductum; quod hominem sibi Deus religaverit, & pietate constrinxerit: quia servire nos ei at Domino; et obsequi ut patri necesse est, Lact. &c. L. IV. cap. 28. Cicero derives it from Relego, Qui autem omnia, quæ ad cultum Deorum pertinerent, diligenter pertraherent, & tanquam relegerent, sunt dicti religiosi ex religendo. L. II. de nat. deor. viz. To read over and over, study, ponder much, and consider attentively the Grounds and Reasons of Piety, Virtue, and Sobriety, and so effectually, and to the Purpose, as to apply all the Means, Motives, and*

gion of the End, or what Ends we were made to answer, in being made rational, sociable, accountable Creatures, conscious of Obligation and Duty, we must have Recourse to the Frame and Constitution of Things: There we find, from the first Creation, the three great Originals and Objects of Duty and Obedience.

THE Religion of the *End* is infallibly true and certain, and as old, indeed, as the Creation; because the God of our Nature presents us with nothing but what really exists¹; and the mutual Relation between Him, the rest of Mankind, and Ourselves, will as infallibly shew itself to our reflecting Reason, as the Things themselves; and the mutual Respect and Care of, Engagement to, and Alliance general with each other, thence resulting, cannot be hid.² That which preserves this Relation, is Order, or Law, to last as long, and be as invariable, as the Relation itself. The Authority

and Helps in our Power for acquitting ourselves of the Duty owing both to the End, and the Means of Religion. To neglect both the End and the Means, is a State of *Irreligion*; to intend the End, and despise the Means, a State of *Dristical* Sufficiency and Contumacy; to prefer the Means to the Neglect of the End, a State of *Superstition* and *Enthusiasm*: each of them offend against the *true State* of Things, not considering them as they *really* are. Whilst *true* Religion, which is therefore true, because it regards Things in their true Nature, and intended Use and Application, as made known unto us, consists in the Opposite of the first, and obviously distinguishes itself to be, and act in a *Medium* between the other two; or, in other Words, in the sincere Application of the Means in order only to the End, and in the conscientious Attainment of the End, by and through the Use of the Means.

¹ In this Respect, *nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dicit*. Which may be thus paraphras'd: If we follow Nature, we are in the Road to the Wisdom that Nature teaches; the Reason of Things is the Voice of Nature; and that Voice is the Will of the Creator of Nature.

² *Lex Deo orta, suo jure nata.*

Authority which enforces the Law, is His who fashioned them as they are ; his Will and Wisdom in enacting, and our Homage in obeying, are as apparent, as that he is our Creator, and we his Créatures. To follow or resist the Reason and Relation of Things, is therefore the same thing as to follow, or resist God. In short, the Relations we were made to fulfil, or the Religion of the End, which was in the Beginning, is now, and ever shall be, are contained in these three noted Branches ; our Duty and Care towards GOD ; our NEIGHBOUR ; OURSELVES.

To observe and keep these in the Perfection of our original Nature, according to its Law and Order, and to conform our Will to the Divine Will, behaving as becomes us in these Respects, is to will and chuse like God, and so imitating his *moral* Attributes, partake of the Divine Nature, and exhibit that *moral* Image of him to the World, *homo homini Deus*. If we were made in the Image of God, as his Revelation affirms, the Glory, Beauty, and Perfection of an Image consists in the nearest *Resemblance* to its Original ; and the several Lights of those Beauties and Perfections shining in Man's Conversation, is the *glorifying our Father*, our Original in Heaven. The several Commands for intending and acting every thing to his *Glory*, are so many Directions for the imitating Nature of Man to be found copying after him ; the Precepts and Recommendations for *Perfection*, are so many Injunctions for improving in Attitude of Action, and Similitude of Disposition : And for us, who ought to make some similar Return of the Benefit we so largely enjoy, to be perfect in our Conduct to *our* Enemies, as he is perfect towards us, *his* Enemies, is, perhaps, the finishing Stroke of that moral Image. The

glorifying the Just, yet merciful Exercise of his Authority, belongs to particular Images of him, *Governors* and *Magistrates*. This is the Law of Nature written in the Heart of Man, i. e. as plain to be read and learned of GOD, as if written there. For what is said 1 *Thes.* iv. 9. of that Relation, which is the Ground of *brotherly Love*, that Men submitting to him in such Things, are taught of GOD *συνδιδάσκοντες*, and elsewhere; the Neglector of such Relation to be worse than an Infidel, may, in a lesser Degree, be affirmed of the Observance of the other Relations; *the Conscience bearing Witness* to them, accusing the Transgression, as Sin; and approving the Performance, as Duty. And for every one to find out whether his Actions, respecting his Neighbour, are conformable to this Law of Nature, upon any Doubt arising, the ready Rule to decide it, is to put ourselves in his Stead and Circumstances; and sincerely ask our Heart what we expect to be done, or omitted by him to us: then we clearly and immediately see without Passion or Self-love, the Law of Action, or Forbearance of Action, due towards our Neighbour, conspicuously and sensibly written in our own Heart, and consequently in every other Heart of Man. This is a Rule of Conscience that never fails, and is always ready at Hand.

I. DUTY to GOD, comprehends our Obedience to all his known Commands, as our Ruler and Governor: *Adoration* of his natural Perfections, freed from all degrading Opinions, what he certainly is not; *Esteem* and *Reverence* of his Name and Excellencies; *Imitation* of his moral Attributes; *Love* of him as the Fountain of all Good; *Trust*, as all Powerful; *Thanksgiving*, as

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our Preserver and Benefactor ; *Fear*, as the Inspector and Judge of our Behaviour ; all which are a collective Honour and Worship arising out of the aforesaid Relation, and due unto him of *Right*.

I. DUTY to our NEIGHBOUR, is observed in *sociable Justice* ; *universal Benevolence* ; and particular *Relative Duties*, as we happen to be placed in the World.

III. DUTY to, or Care of OURSELVES, consists in the due *Government* of our Appetites and Passions ; in the *Knowledge* of ourselves, our Faculties, and Opportunities ; that we are *rational, sociable, and accountable* Creatures ; wherein our Happiness consists ; what is our Good, and what is our Evil ; on whom we depend ; for what we were made ; what Care we ought to take of our Mind, and of our Body, not only for our own-Sake, but with Respect to those who have an Interest in us, God, our Neighbour, our Posterity ; *Diligence, Prudence, guard against Temptations, &c.*

ALL these are the Religion of the End, obligatory upon Man as he came out of the Hands of his Maker, Rational, Sociable, Accountable. Had all human Race been in *Paradise*, they were bound by a Law that altereth no otherwise, than as the Reason and Relation of Things alter, to all these Observances ; and to have been faithful in the Discharge would have been Innocence, Happiness, Paradise ; the Performance of that natural Law was sure of meeting with God's Approbation ; the Neglect of it with his Displeasure Who, for that purpose, will take an exact Ac-

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* *Quid aliud est pietas quam justitia adversus deos : Cic.*

count of every Man's Works; to reward those who diligently seek his Favour in doing these Duties, and consequently punish the Transgressor.

THIS Religion of the End, together with the natural Religion of the Means, (very early springing up out of the State and Nature of Things, as soon as the Primitive Pair were changed from what they were, and lapsed from their Primitive, to a new, *accessory* State; wherein all their Posterity, like themselves, are left *frail* and *peccant*) make up that State of natural Righteousness, by which some, how many to God only known, in all Nations of this many Kingdom'd Earth have been, and shall be accepted of that God, *who is no Respector of Persons*. So everlasting is this moral Law, that our Lord assures, *'till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfill'd*. He himself was the grand Means for redintegrating Obedience to it; and therefore says of himself, *He came not to destroy, but to FULFIL*; and infers to all others, *whosoever shall break one of these least Commandments of that Law, and shall teach Men so, shall be least, accounted least by him, in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do, and teach them, shall be called great in the said Kingdom*.

'THERE is this Difference (says a great Prelate) between the eternal Laws of Justice and Righteousness, and all positive Laws whatever; That as to the first we are made for them, and the nearer we do in all Things conform to them, the more noble, and lovely, and excellent Creatures we are; but as to positive Laws, they are all made for us; and the more they conform to us, the more they obviate all our Wants and Difficulties, the more they answer to all our Necessities, the better they are.'

Now God governing by the Nature of the Things he made, or in the Style of the *Author of Christianity as old as the Creation*, 'as he governs 'all Things according to their Nature,' *pag. 14.* it was requisite that even Paradise itself, the State he had placed them in, should be a State also of their *own Choice* and Consent^s, depending as much upon their Behaviour, as on his Goodness: Had he made them any Promise, to superintend them so, as they should never make a *wrong Choice*, that would have destroyed the very Thing he distinguish'd their Nature by; that *Choice* being the greatest Privilege Man is capable of, without which, there could neither be human Virtue, nor human Nature: Therefore having made the first Pair of our Race moral Agents, he gave them not a Property in themselves; because he ordain'd them *accountable* to himself, by giving them such a Power over their own Persons and Actions, which is their Liberty; for the right or wrong Use whereof, they were answerable to him. Life and Death moreover were laid before them, as Motives to fix their Choice, and preserve their Liberty, as well as all their other Faculties, in the same Uprightness they received them from his Hands.

For a Tryal and Probation of them, in particular, how well they would obey their Maker, and advise with, and *depend* upon him their sure experienced Friend, in all Exigencies and Occurrences that could befall them in their dependent State of Probation; having no Experience, they knew not so much as what was safe to eat for the Preservation of their Being; they depended upon their *Parent* for that Knowledge, and therefore ought to have *depended* upon him for the Know-

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^s *Invitum qui servat, idem facit occidenti.* Hor de Art. Poet.

ledge of all *other* Good and Evil, and not offer to set up for themselves; which has occasioned, ever since, such a Want, Curiosity, and Perplexity about it.

AND to prove to themselves the Strength of the Reason, and the Freedom of Will imparted to them, for governing their then unprejudic'd Appetites, it seem'd necessary to lay them under some *particular* Restraint, by a solemn Prohibition, not to eat of *such* a Tree, called the Tree of Knowledge of GOOD and EVIL; because the eating of that forbidden Fruit through any Temptation, would certainly bring them to the Knowledge, who is the Origin and Fountain of all their Good, and who the Fautor and Promoter of their Evil. There being this Difference between a positive Command to do such a Thing, and a Prohibition to forbear; that the former depends upon Opportunity to put it in Practice, whilst it is always in the Agent's Power to abstain, with respect to the latter. It seems, therefore, fitting that some such Test of Obedience as that, should have been covenanted with, and established upon them, at their first setting out in the World. As there was then no more of their *Species* in being, the Tryal could not have been in the Duty, or Relation to our *Neighbour*; it must therefore be in that Relation between God and Man, both ascending and descending. And this particular Prohibition was an effectual Proof of Obedience with respect to that principal Relation. And because a *Covenant*, this being called in Scripture the *first* Covenant, supposes a *preceding* Law, and has Reference to it: And as *Adam* could not but perceive the Fitness of the Law of his Nature, and likewise the Fitness of that explicit Prohibition, in order to his *Probation*, from the Relation and

and Circumstances he was placed in; he must needs *consent* to, and approve of the Reasonableness of both, and of his bounden Obedience; which made the Covenant, in effect, mutual. Therefore the immutable moral Law of obeying, loving, fearing, and living in a creaturely Dependence upon the Creator; and the moral Law moreover for restraining irregular Appetites, for taking care of ourselves, our Mind, and Body, and Posterity, interposed their several Obligations, to have prevented Disobedience and Sin.

It is therefore a great Mistake to say, there was no *Morality* in this Tryal: When *all* the Morality then in a manner in the World was put upon a Test, and brought to the Touchstone. For the due Obedience to that previous trying Command of God, and the Government of our Appetites and Passions, was the Test and Tryal of all future Obedience to the moral Laws of God; and if our first Parents *would* not keep themselves upright in that, they *could* not afterwards live in exact Uprightness with respect to the Moral Law of their Nature. If *he that offends in one Point is guilty of all*, he that breaks through the *Test* of all Obedience, must certainly be guilty of the most heinous Transgression. And therefore there was a moral Fitness, not capricious Arbitrariness in that Prohibition; especially if the Tree itself (as some have thought) had a natural intoxicating Evil in it. Besides, as there was to be Virtue in forbearing such as entitled to Life, it was further necessary that there should be a Temptation, and a Tempter, without which there can be no Virtue. It should not therefore seem the most unaccountable Thing to our Author, *pag.* 351, 352. that God does permit such a subtle Spirit to tempt Mankind; since his Power is restrained from hurting,

hurting, and is always converted to the Advantage of those who duly submit themselves to God: And indeed the Strength of the Tempter, in shaking and sifting Virtue, consists chiefly in drawing Men to Sins of Commission against a *prohibitory* Law, more than to Sins of Omission against an affirmative Commandment.

THUS Sin entered into the World, and a new Thing being arisen in it, which was not before, a new Name must be given to the Agent, which is that of *Sinner, Transgressor*. Here began the great Change in our moral World; Man fallen from Innocence to a *Proneness to Iniquity and Evil*. A *Proneness and Inclination to Good*, and a free Capacity of preferring it always, and persevering continually therein, was that glorious

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* The poor Plenty of Wit he shews in deriding this most ancient sacred History, *pag. 349.* is acting the low Part of a Merry-Andrew, rather than a serious Writer upon so serious a Subject. Though it is true, 'That *your Ridicule*, if ill placed at first, will certainly fall at last where it deserves;' yet as an Enquiry after true Religion is the most serious, rational Concern in the World, nothing but a grave, serious, rational Treatment can become it; or prove whether the Enquirer is in earnest, or *jest*. 'Grimace and Tone are Helps only to Imposture.' To use the Words of the Author of *Characteristicks*, Vol. I. *pag. 75.* To start Questions, or manage Debates which offend the publick Ear, is to be wanting to that Respect which is due to the common Society. Such Subjects should either not be treated at all in publick, or in such a Manner, as to occasion no Scandal or Disturbance. The Publick is not, on any Account, to be laugh'd to its Face; or so reprehended for its Follies, as to make it think itself contemned. And what is contrary to good Breeding is, in this respect, contrary to Liberty. If it is imprudent to lose a Friend for the Sake of a Jest, what Wit is there in losing Heaven? The pretended Politeness of the Ridicule, is only setting a finer Edge upon the Tool, which excuses not the Author's ill Intention, of rendering that contemptible, which, in the Nature of Things, and in the Opinion of all thinking Persons, ought to be out of the Reach of such unworthy Treatment.

moral Image wherein God made Man upright ; the nearest Resemblance that a mutable, imitating, intelligent Creature could be framed to its Maker. And after *Adam* was so altered by Transgression, the Son that he begot *in his own Image*, as it is affirmed (and so from Generation to Generation) was doubtless, like him, alter'd and corrupted in the Tendency of Inclination, and *approved* of Evil as well as Good ; which is a frequent Sense of *knowing* in Scripture. That that was the original Constitution of human Nature in the *Image* of God, before Government and Magistracy entered, (another *Sort* of Image of him for revenging Blood) seems very plain, because when we are renewed in the Spirit of our Minds, and created after God in Righteousness and true Holiness, it is called *the new Creature, and the Divine Nature, and the Image of God* ; and the *exceeding great and precious Promises* were designed to make us *Partakers of that Nature*.

PASSIONS and Appetites, which before were submissive, weak, and in the dependent Condition of Servants, became insolent, craving, and striving for the Mastery ; and, being gratify'd once, not only expect, but demand and clamour to be so always. Reason became weaker in its Authority and Rule, and very imperfectly submitted to : The Understanding, which before was fallible, grew feebler in its Discernment, and subjected to many Prejudices. The Liberty of Will was captivated by Irregularities, and too much enslaved to Deviations. In short, the whole Constitution became altered, and so alter'd, transmitted to Posterity. For *who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean ? O thou Adam, what hast thou done ? For though it was thou that sinnedst, thou art not fallen alone, but we all that come of thee, &c.*

2 *Esd.* vii. 48. Now granting the Derivation of Mankind from *one Original Pair*; which our Author, after such an universal satisfying Discovery from Revelation, could not have had the Assurance to deny in *earnest*, either as a *Philosopher*, a *Moralist*, or *Civilian*: It is demonstrable from two self-evident Notions, that there must have been a State of primitive Innocence, as well as there is now a State of Sin, Frailty, and Disorder.

First, If it is a self-evident Notion, (our Author, *pag.* 3, 7, 49, and abundance of Places, admits the Conclusiveness of this Argument, and triumphs in it, with respect to Religion proceeding from God) that God is *all-perfect* in Wisdom, Goodness, Power; it follows, that his Handy-work, especially his own Image, must first proceed from him *perfect* and compleat, lacking nothing; being the *God*, *evangelist* presiding over the little, and great World subjected to him under God. That the Body, and Soul (the latter consisting of Life and Spirit) being called together and united in the Constitution of an human, intelligent, free Agent; their several Properties were proportioned to each other, and adjusted in order, according to their Use and Dignity; and so united in Action by all the Laws of Harmony, as might best adorn, and render such an Union most enjoyable. That all the Faculties were perfect and entire in their Kind; the Understanding seeing with its Eye the natural Perfections of God, and his Creatures, and the natural Law of Obligations flowing from the Relations and Habitudes of the moral World, what is Man's Good and what is his Evil, as clearly as the Eye of the Body perceived outward Objects; the Will unbiased'd in its Liberty, exactly poised, and inclined

clined to obey any Command of its Maker ; the Passions at their several Posts, to meet and entertain their Objects ; the Law of the Members all submissive to their Leader. Whence follows, in a natural inseparable Result, for some Time of Life at least, a State of Innocence, Order, and Harmony ; sufficient to have constituted a Paradise in any Place, had there not been a particular local one for their Entertainment.

Secondly, If it is a self-evident Truth, and Matter of Fact, felt by every Man, and complained of by most Moralists with a Sort of Wonder ; that a State of Disorder, Weakness, and Unconstancy has, from the most antient Complaints, confirmed by the Experience of every Age, seized all the Faculties of Man ; many of the Heathen Philosophers were so sensible of this universal Depravation of Soul, and Degeneracy from the divine Life and Original of our Being, that they invented the *Hypothesis* of the Pre-existent State of Souls, in order to solve it ; by acquitting God from being the Author of it, and imputing it to the Demerit of Sin in some former State, imagining this bodily Life to be the Prison and Punishment of the Soul for those Crimes. It has been Man's general Observation and Complaint of himself in all Places, that he often does what he approves not in his Mind ; that
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Video meliora probog; deteriora sequor. Arrian Epict. L. II. cap. 26. Arist. Eth. L. I. cap. 13. III. 4. Seneca has many, and Tully some of these Complaints. The Chinese Philosopher Confucius's Morals, pag. 21, 23, declares the Integrity of Man to have been a Present from Heaven, and that it was his Endeavour to re-establish it ; but that the *Holy Man* was in the West, in quest of whom one of the Emperors sent Ambassadors, A. D. 65. who landing in one of the Islands
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some old Leaven works a *Nititur in vetitum*, an Inclination to what is forbidden; or, in Scripture-Language, the *corruptible Body presseth down the Soul*; the *Law of the Members struggles against the Law of the Mind*; and too often, though most preposterously, gets the Ascendant. In many Things we offend all of us: If we say we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. I am carnal, sold under Sin; that which I do, I allow not; what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I.¹ If this is the true Condition, and present Circumstance of Man, it undeniably follows, that a great Change for the worse must have been introduced into the moral State of our Nature, from what it was in its Original: And as that Change must have proceeded either from God, or Man; it being shewn before, it could not

near the Red-Sea met with the Idol of *Fobi*, contented themselves with that, carried it back to *China*, which has establish'd *Idolatry* and *Atheism* ever since. But above all Heathens, *Plato* is as particular as if he had read the Scriptures; he says, in *Critia*, 'the Divine Nature once flourish'd in Man, but Man prevail'd against it, from which Fountain came all our Evils.' In his *Polit.* 'That the Nature and Condition of Man has been changed for the worse, and a prodigious Ungovernableness has invaded Mankind, and that weak Men, deprived of their Guardian, are every where devour'd by the wild Beasts of their Passions.' In *Leg. L. V.* 'That this great Evil is innate, *ἐμφυτον*; when Men indulge themselves in it, they find no Remedy to free themselves. He calls this Malignity of Nature *κακοψυχία*. And in *Timeo* ingeniously confesses, that our Nature was corrupted in the first of our Race, *ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ*. And *Rep. VII.* derives the Ignorance of Man from that Source. And his Scholar *Aristotle* most acutely demonstrates Ignorance to be the Cause of all Sin. *Etb. L. III. cap. 1.*

¹ *Rom. vii. 14, 15.* Our Author, *pag. 221.* makes a very spiteful Insinuation from these last Words, as spoke in his own Person, to reflect upon the *Apostle* as a very wicked Person, whilst he was in that Office; and every where most injudiciously,

not have the former for its Author; it remains, that it must derive from the latter, as its Fountain. The unchangeable God had no farther Hand in it, than by permitting, as became him, his free, changeable Creature Man to act according to his Nature, and make Use of the Liberty he had entrusted him with, at his own Discretion.

Now, if this mighty Alteration came to pass, our Author must either have accounted for it according to the *Mosaical* History of the Fall of our first Parents, or have produced some other History and Account of it. But he is accountable, and very culpable to all his Readers, in particular, for the grand Fallacy, the *apōry* *ΔΙΣ* of his whole Book; for his establishing as a Principle, and every where repeating it as the scientific Premise he adheres to, for his Inferences against Revelation in general, and Christianity in particular; viz. * That a Religion absolutely perfect (meaning the Law of Nature immediately established by God at the very first Creation, issuing out of the Relations of Things then made, as he every where * explains himself) admits of no Alteration; nor is capable of Addition,

ciously, or against his Conscience, quits the Meaning, catches at the Sound of Words, to gratify his Spleen in aspersing the Holy Scripture. Tho' the Words run in his *own Person*, they are certainly meant, and can only be true, of the uncorrupted natural Man; and the unregenerated *Jew*, described in several preceding Chapters: That he chose that Method of Expression, was owing to his Knowledge of human Nature, and his great Skill in addressing those he spoke, or wrote to. See more Instances of the like inoffensive Way of Address of this Apostle, *Rom. vii. 24, 25. iii. 7. 1 Cor. x. 21, 29. Eph. ii. 3. 1 Cor. i. 12.* compared with *Chap. iv. 6.*

* Pag. 3, 49, 52.

* Pag. 17, 51, 54, 166, 385.

dition, or Diminution, must be as *immutable* as the Author of it. Revelation therefore can add nothing to a Religion thus absolutely perfect, universal and immutable.

AGAIN, Religion thus founded on these immutable Relations, must at all Times, and in all Places, be alike *immutable*; since external Revelation not being able to make any Change in these Relations, and the Duties that necessarily result from them, can only recommend and inculcate these Duties; except we suppose, that God at last acted the Tyrant, and imposed such Commands, as the Relations we stand in to him, and one another, no ways require; pag. 166. Again, he has the Assurance to put the Question, contrary to Fact and Experience; Will any affirm that the Nature of Man is changed? Or that the Relations God and Man stand in to one another, are not always the same? pag. 385. But this mighty Reasoner, who deduces the Immutability of his Religion from the *Immutability* of the Relation between God and Man, ought surely to have better consider'd, whether Man the descending Part of the Relation, is as *immutable* as God: Was he indeed made so, his Conclusion would have been infallibly certain; but as it happens, that God is only wise and immutable, and Man otherwise, it has just so much Truth in it, and no more, than one manifest Falshood following from another. For upon the first Commencement of the above-mentioned Change, a *new* Relation commenced between God and Man, which subsisted not before; between an *Offender* and *Offended*, a *Lawgiver* and a *Sinner*, a *Governor* and a *Rebel*; and out of that Relation arose a *new* *Regard* and *Interposition* on God's Part; and on Man's, *new* *Obliga-*

Obligations and Duties, neither of which were before.

OUR Author, *pag.* 91. allows, ‘ To alter one’s Conduct, as Circumstances alter, is not only an Act of the greatest Prudence and Judgment, but is consistent with the greatest Steadiness.’ How then will it impeach God of Changeableness, when upon such a Change in Man, he is still as steady to his Happiness, in a Way suitable to that Alteration, as he was at the first creating Man? A Revelation from God does not therefore make him *mutable*, as he says, *pag.* 51. nor does it change the Relations of Things, whereon Man’s Duty is founded; but supposes them to *have been* changed by *Man*, as the Foundation of its Expediency. Nor does the Christian Revelation shew him a Tyrant in any of his Commands, being all directed to the fulfilling that Duty, which results from the original Nature of Things, as Man is capable of performing. And the very Character and Encomium of the *Perfection* of the Law of God governing a changeable, and changed Man, instead of consisting in *Immutability*, is founded in its *actual Change*, corresponding to the Change in *Man*; because in this respect it may attain its End, and so be perfect; but in the other, it could never after attain its End of perfect Obedience, and therefore must be imperfect, as a Law requiring it: And consequently must be susceptible of such *Alterations* and *Additions* from the interposing Favour of God, making such Provisions in his Revelation, as shall enable Man to perform it, to the Improvement of his own Happiness, and the Glory of the Divine Acceptance. And, as it admits of *Addition* on the Side of Favour to Man’s Condition, so does it of *Diminution*.

tion on the same Side, in not exacting the *rigid* Obedience that was due before.

IF therefore this Change is an undeniable Matter of Fact, the *Religion of Nature deliniated* has observed, with respect to any Truth, 'Not
' to own Things to be what they are, is direct
' Rebellion against him who is the Author of
' Nature; and again, designedly to treat Things
' as being what they are not, is the greatest
' possible Absurdity:' What then becomes of the Foundation of this boasted Performance? If its Admirers have thought it built upon a Rock, they may plainly perceive its Bottom is no better than slippery, deceivable Sand.

FOR other new Relations moreover will be found to have arisen after the Fall, which were unknown before, and yet evidently spring out of the *Nature* of Things. God immediately enter'd into Judgment for the audacious Transgression, and gave some Token of his Displeasure by a present Alteration of Man's Circumstances, for the worse, in the natural World; that since he would not govern his bodily Appetites, he might smart for it in his Body, during his Life present; then arose Toil and Labour, Diseases, Pains, Decays, and all the Disorders and Disquietudes of Life; and out of that new Relation arose the new Duty of *Patience*; and at last, Death; which produced *another* new Relation: For as none of us live to ourselves, so no body *dies to himself*. But Man was not left comfortless, God, mercifully severe, by a new Profusion of Mercy, respited final Judgment, and put him upon a new Probation, *viz.* that of *sincere* Obedience to the Law of Nature, in lieu of entire, which was become impracticable.

THEN, and there commenc'd the natural Religion of the MEANS, for carrying on the natural Religion of the End; *Repentance*, and *Prayer*. And to encourage both these Means, and make them the more effectual, a *Promise* was made, which begot a *new* Relation, Occasion, or *Waiting* of Patience, *Rom. viii. 25. of one mighty to save Sinners, and to destroy the Works of the Devil*; who was in due time to become Man from the Seed of the Woman *only*. This was the *Mediator* of the *new and better* Covenant; towards whom, after he had finished the Work of our Redemption, a new explicit Relation arose, and out of that, new Duties. A *new* Covenant supposes an old one *broken*; the Condition of which was, the Work of Perseverance and Obedience without Failure, *do this and live*; a just Tribute from Faculties, which had no warp towards Evil, nor the least Imbecility towards Good, there being a full Power and untainted Uprightness in every one of them. Therefore no Favour of Repentance allowed, because Man's Condition, compleatly provided for as it was, at first needed it not. Besides, the supreme Authority of God, and the absolutely dependant Condition of Man so perfectly capable of Obedience, naturally enacted, and plainly required the Obedience of the first Covenant to be constant and entire, perpetual and universal. Had Reconciliation upon Repentance been express'd or implied in the original Condition, it could have serv'd to no other Purpose, but to have frustrated the very Nature of a Covenant founded upon unfinning Obedience, so becoming God to require, and Man to comply with at first. Besides, no Law in the World, from the Beginning to the End thereof, ever provides, or so much as insinuates a Remedy against

the *Penalties* it denounces. Had Man continued therein, God had the disadvantage, in being a perpetual *Debtor* to Man, according to *that* Scripture, the Reward had not been of Grace but of *Debt*.

THE new Covenant of Obedience therefore, the Wisdom, Favour, and Grace of God interposing as soon as ever there was occasion, and not before, was temper'd with Allowance, and Indulgence to Man's alter'd Condition, and the Performance of the Law of Nature reconciled to the Creature's *Capacity* of obeying; not what was strictly due, but so much as Man, who had fool'd and enfeebled himself by sinning, was *able* to do, was thenceforth to be accepted through the Mediator: Hearty Repentance, and Prayer (promoted and encouraged by *Hope* in the MEDIATOR, where *promised*; by *Faith*, where made known; and where not known, or the Promise quite forgot or corrupted through long Tract of Time, by *Diligence after Knowledge*, and *sincere Application* to present Opportunities) were to piece up broken Obedience as oft as it was broken, till it became more and more entire in the Lives of God's Servants throughout the whole World. And God would from thenceforward govern by the Law of FAVOUR and GRACE on his own Part, and of the REMEDY of Recovery on Man's Side, as long as the World endured.

' If you would recommend *Natural Religion* (as is judiciously observed by the present *Bishop of Salisbury, Use and Intent of Prophecy*, p. 52. 3d Edit.) ' exclusively of all other Assistance, ' 'tis not enough to shew from Principles of Reason, the *Excellency* and *Reasonableness* of moral ' Virtue, or to prove from the *Nature of God*, ' that he must delight in and reward Virtue;

' you must go one Step further, and prove from
 ' the *Nature* of *Man* too, that he is excellently
 ' qualified to obey this Law, and cannot well
 ' fail of attaining all the Happiness under it that
 ' ever Nature designed for him. If you stop
 ' short at this Consideration, What do you gain?
 ' What imports it that the *Law* is *good*, if the
 ' *Subjects* are so *bad*, that either they will not,
 ' or cannot obey it? When you prove to the
 ' Sinners the Excellency of natural Religion,
 ' you only shew them how justly they may expect
 ' to be punish'd for their Iniquity: A sad
 ' Truth, which wants no Confirmation! All the
 ' possible Hope left in such a Case is, that God
 ' may freely pardon and restore them; but whether
 ' he will or no, the Offenders can never certainly
 ' learn from natural Religion.'

FROM our Author's Concession as above, it
 follows, That there is no Imputation of Unstead-
 diness or Change upon God, for his Condescen-
 sion to his changed Creature; the Wisdom of
 Legislators, and the Excellency of their Laws,
 being chiefly seen in adapting their Laws to the
 Circumstances of those who are subject to them.
 That he saw what would happen, was no manner
 of Argument that he should not have suffer'd
 it to come to pass; for then he would have ceased
 to have govern'd according to the *Nature* of the
 Creature he had made. Had an absolute unfin-
 ning Obedience been afterwards exacted, there
 had been no Subjects of the human Race to have
 obey'd, they must all have perished; but He,
 who is the Maker of all Men, is the Saviour also
 of all Men, in the easy practicable Method of
 the new Covenant. The Law of the first Cove-
 nant was as exactly adjusted to the Circumstances
 and Capacity of Man then, as now it is miti-

gated to his present erring and straying Condition.

THUS commenced the Religion of the *Means*, or the Recovery and Restoration of Man to the Performance of the Religion of the End, as his frail weak Condition, and Imperfection, is *now* capable of. Had Man never once presumptuously transgressed, nor subjected himself to farther Transgression; neither Repentance, nor Remission of Sins, nor any remedial positive Parts of Religion, nor any Mediator of Reconciliation, nor any Revelation of that Sort had ever been heard of. Neither his Mind, nor his Body would have known the Want of any Thing in his private, or publick Capacity; and where no Want in any Respect, no room for coming to God in Supplication, or Intercession, *i. e.* PRAYER.

NOW whatever is beneficial in promoting, and subservient to the furtherance of any Thing, may, in that Respect, be called a MEANS, and accounted more or less useful, or necessary, respectively to its Tendency and intrinsick Efficacy in advancing the other: And consequently, can have no other, but will have all that Appointment, Duty, or Morality go along with it, as it promotes, or has a native Tendency to promote the *End*, it was ordained to answer. *Media ordinem, modum, mensuram, amabilitatem sumunt, a Fine.* The Religion of the End being necessary to be performed, gives us, at once, the whole Reason and Religion of the other, why it is commanded: For whatever Authority commands the End, must be supposed to oblige to all the proper Means in the Power of the Performer. As sure, therefore, as God has laid us under Obligations to Himself, our Neighbour, and Ourselves, and as often moreover as those Engagements

ments are transgressed, he obliges all Mankind to that REPENTANCE and PRAYER, which are the best natural Means of undoing what has been done amiss, and doing better for the future, in each of those Particulars. And because such Repentance and Prayer towards God are necessary; whatever *explicit Faith* or Knowledge most actuates, and best enlivens both of them, when the World is grown cold and dead to the Performance of either of them, becomes useful in the Reason of the Thing, as well as necessary by the Command of God. Therefore FAITH in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who has obtained Remission of Sins, and Access to the Father, is necessary, where-ever made known, *tam necessitate medii, quam præcepti*; because it best operates upon that Repentance and Prayer, which are to restore us to the Religion of the End, and improve our Obedience to the same.

THE performing the Religion of the End through the Means in our Power, is called *Righteousness* in the Scripture-Style; and to endeavour with all Sincerity, to the utmost of our frail Ability, to observe it through the Means afforded in the Gospel, is to *hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, to be *blessed* in so doing, and to be *filled* and satisfied, that those Means are All-sufficient for that End. Thus Christianity, the Remedy, is co-eval with the Disease: And thus true Religion, or the Recovery of Man to his Duty, by the Means of a *competent* Mediator between God and Man, has been, and will be the same in Substance, from the first to the last Sinner of our Race. This gives a right Notion of the Necessity of embracing that Faith, where it is promulged, not for itself, but *subordinately* to something *else*. And as in all other Laws, so in

the Divine, the Reason and Ground of them is the only sure Way of ever knowing the true Construction, or the right Measure of their Obligation, or their real Design upon us. And this Way of referring to the End, affords the true Moment and Importance of all Opinions touching that *one* Faith. And as the End of Words is to signify Things, Words themselves (being for the most Part subject to Ambiguity in all Languages, the Reason why most Controversies are generally little else but about Words) are to be measured from Things, and the best Reason of Things, not Things from Words altogether. The next Enquiry is,

How, after the Appearance of Christianity in the World, that Grand *Revolution* of the Redress of human Grievances, promised soon after the first Entrance of Sin, for redeeming us from the Slavery and Dominion of arbitrary Masters, to the Liberty of a better Government, Faith in *Christ*, or the Christian Religion, actuates the natural Religion of the Means for accomplishing the Religion of the End. *First*, it *approves* of all that is *Good* in the old perpetual Religion, both of the End, and the Means. *Secondly*, it mends and *improves* by its Corrections and Instructions whatever was corrupted in *either*, and mightily recommends and enforces both of them.

I. It *approves* of all that is *Good*. And what better Proof of the Gospel coming from God, than its shewing itself in its most apparent, and ofteneft declared Design, to have the same End, as right Reason, which certainly comes from him, has, *viz.* for regulating our whole Conduct aright in those three foresaid Relations?

Now

Now *that* moral Part of the Gospel stood in need of no Proof from *Miracles*, by Reason it carry'd its own Evidence and Recommendation along with it. The Use which our Lord and his Disciples made of them, was to attract Attention, and fix the Consideration of the reasoning Faculties of the *Jews*; whether those he wrought himself in the Name of him that sent him, and those wrought by the Disciples in the Name of their Lord and Master that sent them, did not abundantly and unexceptionably prove to them, that he was actually the *expected Messiah*,[†] *the HE that was to come*. That was the very Thing, and the only Thing *to be proved* to them, by Miracles, in concurrence with other Characteristicks of Prophecy, with Respect to them, and to the *Gentiles*.

AND the numerous incontestable Miracles did clearly ascertain the World, that it assuredly was the Will of Heaven; for all Men, and in Time, all Nations, to embrace that most advantageous *Medium* for performing their Duty, presented to them in the Knowledge of the appointed *Mediator* between God and Man. And that there could be no manner, nor the least Umbrage of Imposition in the Case; seeing and hearing the old Doctrine set forth to be pursued for the End, was the best and purest that ever was heard, their own Conscience bearing Witness; and the *new* Doctrine of the *Means* (to which the greatest and best Miracles bore Witness) declared their Aim and Design to be the furthering and promoting natural Religion, or the Religion of the End, at the same Time it proposed, and expounded the compleatest of all Means, the *one only true Way*,

[†] Job. vii. 31. x. 38.

Way, for carrying on, and perfecting the Whole Duty of Man, and gaining Acceptance with God moreover, though imperfectly performed, at the best.

It is therefore a palpable Mistake, and Misnomer in *such* Writers as our Author, to affirm and accuse, that we Christians argue in a Circle, making the *Goodness* of the Doctrine, a Proof of the Truth of the Miracle; and the *Miracle* a Proof of the Doctrine. The Miracle is, indeed, according to its Design, a Proof of the Doctrine; but not the *same* Doctrine, but of a *new* one, *viz.* That of the most efficacious *Means* from *Heaven*, by a Person sent, his own Son sent by his and our Father there, for carrying on the primary, neglected, dislocated Doctrine, the Religion of the End. This last was evermore absolutely necessary for every Worker of truly commissioned Miracles, to profess never to swerve from, but to be his Aim to promote always, as a collateral incontestable Proof of the Reality of his Mission; and of the missive Friendship of God, as well as the Superiority of the Power that effected it, above all other inferior, permissive Powers, skilful, as many of them are, in very strange Things. And that *He*, advancing one and the same Design, though by a new and better *Mean*, must certainly be authorized by that supreme God, who, by the Confession of all Men, is the God of the Religion of Nature.

St. JOHN, at the End of his Gospel, sets forth the true Use and End of Evangelical Miracles. These Things were done, *that we might believe he was the Son of God*; agreeably to his own profess'd Design of his own Miracles, *the Works that I do, bear Witness of me that the Father hath sent me*;

me¹; the Works that I do in my Father's Name, they bear Witness of me²; if I bear Witness of my self, my Witness is not true³; if I had not done among them the Works which none other Man did, they had not had Sin⁴; i. e. Sin of Infidelity; with more to the same Purpose.

THUS in the Law and the Prophets, the first Institution attested with Miracles from Heaven, God, the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever, approved, collected, and wrote upon Stone the Ten Commandments, being all that was good of natural Religion, for the Use of the hard-hearted Jews, which he wrote upon the softer Hearts of other Nations, regulating what was grown neglected by the *Affirmative*, and correcting what was corrupted by the *Negative* or prohibitory Precepts. And as he was thus careful about the Religion of the End, in securing the loving God with all the Heart; and our Neighbour as ourselves; and the Care of ourselves as the Apple of our Eye: Or, in another Abridgment, the doing Justice, loving Mercy, and walking humbly with God; fearing him so truly, as to keep his Commandments, and no Man so falsely as to break them: So he took Care to perfect the Religion of the Means, as far as they could be perfected; till the Fulness of the Time was come. Thus Repentance, in particular, ceasing to do Evil, learning to do well, was very much exhorted to, and quickned by many Prophets, and many Providences. And the Faith that secretly enliven'd that, was strengthened by often repeated Oracles, and

¹ Job. v. 36. ² x. 25. ³ v. 31. ⁴ xv. 24.

⁵ Ἀθανάσιος μὲν πρῶτα θεός, ὁμοῦ ὡς δεῦκένταί, τίμα. Pythag. Nihil esse unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmet ipsos sumus. Tum illud effici, quod quibusdam incredibile videretur, sit autem necessarium, ut nemo sese, plus quam alterum diligat. Cicer. ἢ ὅθι σέδντογ.

and Renovations of the Promise of their *Messiah*, and of the *Light* of the rest of the World, who was to teach them, and the World, *all Things*.

MEAN Time the appointed Emblem, and Types of the Propitiation (*Figures of the true*) went on for obtaining the Favour of Heaven. And very wisely, by the Way, were the Sacrifices of that Service, with the numerous Rituals chosen and sorted, for keeping the Children of *Israel*, especially the Tribe of *Juda*, a peculiar unmixing People, with the rest of the World: Intending to preserve them free from the *Idolatri* which prevailed round about them; so as to be an Abomination to many, perhaps, to all their Neighbours. They were allowed, for Instance, both to sacrifice, and eat the Ox, and all the rest of his Family; which the *Egyptians* adored as their God, whom they neither dared to sacrifice, nor touch as Victuals: And for that Reason, among others, would have no Communion with the other. Through such peculiar Statutes, and temporary Ordinances, they were, in fact, effectually preserved a peculiar Nation from all others; which was the very Thing God aimed at. Because the Salvation of the World, *Jesus Christ*, the Sacrifice of all Sacrifices, without whose precious Blood-shedding, no Remission of Sins, was, as the Record affirms, *of the Jews*: To be born of one of the Families (the Lineage of *David*) of one of their Tribes; *theirs* was the Oracle, or Prophecies of the Time when, the Place where, the Character and Description of his Person.

THUS the Law given to them from Heaven, bringing with it *stated, written* Emendations, both of the Means, and of the End of natural Religion, was moreover occasionally a Providential Illumination of the Heathen World, in the
Morality

Morality they ought to keep up to: And gave them, over and above, some Prediction, and positive Expectation of that mighty Person called the DESIRE of the *Gentiles*; placed, as they were for that Purpose, (being first *extraordinarily* drawn out of *Egypt* with a *mighty Hand*) in the *Center*, as it were, of the then inhabited, and most intelligent Part of the World. Partly by their Captivities to *Media*, and *Babylon*¹; which severally served to spread the good Notions of their *Decalogue*, and the Predictions of their *Messiah* (the common Saviour of all Men) all over the *Eastern World*; however, the Tradition became afterwards much corrupted and metamorphis'd, as has been observed by learned Travellers. Partly by their near Communication with the *Phœnicians*; who are most probably reputed to have peopled *Carthage*, which first peopled *South-America*²: But especially by their sojourning, and communicating afterwards, so long, with the *Egyptians*; who, by Means of *Pythagoras*, and *Plato's* Travels thither, taught the *Greeks*; who taught the *Romans*; who may be said to have taught *Europe* some Purity in Morals, and several Excellencies of the Divine Nature. So that what is good in Heathen Ethicks³, may be said to have sprang formerly from the *Jewish*, and since, more perfectly from the *Christian* Revelation; whilst some concealed, others

¹ *Zoroastres*, the great Founder of Knowledge and Religion in the *East*, was a *Jew* by Religion, and probably Servant under *Daniel*: *Pythagoras* learnt from him; the rest of *Greece* from *Pythagoras*. *Prid. Connection*, pag. 213, 228, 229.

² See Introduction to *Bibliotheca Itinerantium*, by *Harris*.

³ *Vid. Galeum de ortu & progressu Philosophiæ, ejusque traductione à sacris fontibus*. *Huet. Alnetan Quest.* *Euseb. Prepar. Evang.* *Theoph. ad Autol.* *Athenagoras.* *Just. Mart. Apol.*

others knew not to whom they were originally beholden.

It may be observed further, that the Reason, perhaps, why God is so often represented in the Jewish Dispensation, as having *Human Parts and Passions*, was in Affirmance of their Hope of their *Messiah*; prophetically declarative, that he, who was their Heavenly President and Leader, (the Son of God) would actually, in due Time, take upon him Human Parts and Passions, to do yet greater and mightier Things for them, and the rest of the World. For, after *God was indeed manifested in the Flesh*, all that Language ceased in Scripture.

THEN upon the *visible* Appearance of Christianity in the World, which is to the World a new Improvement, and the real Perfection of the moral perpetual Part of the other, as well as the last Revelation of the Will of God before he calls it to Judgment, was abolished, only what was temporary, and actually had become superfluous in the Mosaic Dispensation; proving it, at the same Time, by greater Miracles, their own Argument, to be the Will of Heaven, that the *Substance* (being come) of the *instituted Part of their Religion, the Mediator* between God and Man, should in all Reason take Place of the Shadow, and supersede the Figure. Whilst it confirmed, and confirms whatever is really and perpetually good, both in the Religion of the End, and of the Means, whether among the *Jews*, or *Gentiles*: Improving by its better Precepts, Means, Aids, Motives, Helps, that which was good to better; mending what wanted to be mended, and helping what needed Help in each.

THUS, as to the Religion of the End, in the three Divisions of Duty to OURSELVES,
NEIGHBOUR,

NEIGHBOUR, and GOD; the Grace of God (in like manner as the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ) has appeared unto all Men, *i. e.* to *Jews*, and *Gentiles*, under which Division *all Men* at that time were comprehended, to whom the Gospel has appeared; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live *Soberly, Righteously, and Godly* in this present World. So far is it from disapproving, that it professes openly, and every where, to carry on the same good and excellent Ends, that natural Religion was ordain'd unto, through more potent and efficacious Methods. Not condemning what little may happen to be well done, with an Intention of pleasing God, in Dependance upon his rewarding Favour (essential to the Character of well doing before him) under the Notion of *splendida peccata*; but makes itself necessary, wherever preach'd, by shewing what the other knew nothing of, *viz.* the only Way of Salvation, how God remits Sins, and admits us unto himself; which stimulates to Newness of Life, introduces our Addresses to him, and actuates all the Means of being good, and doing good. St. Peter, full of the *Holy Ghost*, proclaims, *of a Truth God is no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh the Righteousness* ¹ of those moral Duties, *is accepted of him*, *q. d.* to some of the many Mansions of Reward in Heaven, or so accepted, as, by his Providence, to be brought to the Knowledge and Instruction of those better Means, for rendering him not only almost, but altogether a good Christian; as was the Case of *Cornelius*, which gave occasion to those Words.

AND

¹ *Acts* x. 34.

AND as it approves of Obedience to the natural Law of Righteousness in the Religion of the End, so does it with Respect to that of the Means, Repentance, and Prayer, in almost infinite Places.

II. It *improves* the good, and mends whatever was corrupted in either of them, at the same time it mightily operates upon both of them. It would be endless to enumerate in Particulars, the manifold Excellencies and Advantages of the Christian, over the *Jewish, Pagan, or Mahometan* Religion; as well in regard to its carrying those moral Virtues, which they all in common make a shew of requiring, to greater Perfection than any of them; as in the better Ways and Means to attain them in that Perfection.

IN short, its grand Purpose is to lead us to Heaven and unchangeable Happiness, by first recovering us to the Image of God, or the primæval Perfection of our Nature; by healing all its Infirmities, as concerning Evil, and animating all its Powers, Choices, and Passions after true Good; by curing and removing all its Defects, Imperfections, and Hindrances, both in Knowledge and Practice, that are prejudicial to the same. Thus the Rule of its Faith and Practice describes itself, *able to make wise unto Salvation through Faith which is in Christ Jesus*; as *profitable for Doctrine*, in that which is true in Divine Things; *for Reproof*, in that which is false in Doctrine; *for Correction*, in whatever is wrong in Practice; *for Instruction*, in all Things good and righteous, *that the Man of God may be thoroughly furnished to all good Works*¹. To run over the three Branches of Duty:

First,

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

First, THE Love of God, which was in a manner lost and swallowed up of Fear and horrid Apprehensions, with respect to their own dispiriting Guilt among the *Gentiles*, is clearly manifested in that great, amiable, and most endearing Instance, of *sending his only begotten Son into the World*, for the universal Redemption of it, sufficient to remove any unrighteous Thoughts of God's being partial. And the Command of loving with all the Heart, Soul, Strength, being very much serviliz'd among the *Jews*, was made a placid and delightful Affection through the Christian Revelation, of its true Grounds and most engaging Reasons, of *God first loving us*, not we him: That he loved, yet being Enemies, so very indulgent to our Happiness, that, if we have any Love for that, or ourselves, or for Loving-kindness of the greatest Cost and Condescension possible from Heaven, it must have its intended Operation in *shedding abroad the Love of God upon our Hearts*, in such a Warmth, and such a Lastingness of Impression, as to constrain us to re-love above all Things, the Divine Goodness, which concerted and effected those gracious Methods, and live to him we love.

THE Author of *Christianity*, &c. ¹ cites 1 *John* iv. 19. for the Ground and Inducement of our Love to God, *because he first loved us*; willfully dropping the very Instance and Manner of his first loving us assign'd, ver. 10. viz. *the sending his Son to be a Propitiation for us*. As if he disdain'd for his own Part, and would induce every

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body else to the like Contempt of being beholden to any such Overtures of redeeming Love: So imperfect and unfair, almost every where, are his sorry Representations of Christianity.

THE *Fear* of God was tempered, and improved from that of Servants to that becoming *Sons*; which is so encouraged, as to cast out servile, distant, unapproaching Fear. To be afraid to displease a *Father*, is a chosen Fear, and, of all Fear, most coercive from transgressing against him: Seeing he gave up his only begotten Son unto Death, the Wages of our Sin, that we might revive in the Body after its Decease, and live for ever: and learn to stand in Awe here of a Father so much kinder to us; and of Sin so abhorrent to him, and which will become our Ruin, when it ceases to be our Fear.

TRUST is endeared and improved upon the same Grounds a Child has to depend upon a reconciled Father, in every Want of Things, first for us: No more doubting his Care and Provision for our Temporal State, in the due Use of lawful Means, than of his actual visible Well-Providence for the *Fowls of the Air*, and the *Lillies of the Field*; both Fellow-Pensioners of the Divine Providence, and yet altogether of so much less Consideration than we. This is ridiculed by our Author*, but with great Ignorance; for no Argument in any Human Discourse, tending to the same Conclusion, is to be compared to it for Self-Evidence, nor can any Topick, *a minore ad majus*, more beautifully, or half so familiarly captivate the Mind of Man, or shame his distrustful

ful Logick, upon such a Subject. Whatever copies after Nature, is the true Sublime in Language; and the most inward affecting *ratio*, for the Persuasion of all Men, as all Men are supposed to consider, and understand what they are born to, *Nature*.

BUT to return; if they are respected with the super-intending Care of our Heavenly Father, we his Children, who have the Dominion over them for Use, may be very well assured of a much greater, and more particular Care, especially when we serve him, and rule over them in the Kingdom of God, which is a Kingdom of perfect Friendship and Reconciliation. That, was there nothing else, ought to compose our Minds, and free them from that Distrust so visible in the *Gentiles*, who know not how God is their Father; and therefore rely so anxiously, and yet so fruitlessly, upon their own Care and Conduct altogether, as if there was none in Heaven to care for them, or mean them any Good. And as to trusting God for Pardon of Sin, and Supply of Spiritual Wants, where had they any? and yet what a Door of Assurance does Christianity set open to all Supplicants? As if we saw the Lord God of our Salvation, knowing his Son, now sitting at his Right Hand, to have once died for our Sins, sign our Pardon with his own Hand, upon the easy Conditions it is offered. If he has actually given us his *only Son*, the greatest of all possible Gifts, how shall he forbid any, or all lesser Gifts and Graces to flow freely from that Fountain and Foundation of all his renewed Mercies unto Man? And knowing the given Son to be also Son of Man, our Advocate always, till

he is our Judge, at the last Day, how secure are we, seeing the Mercy and Justice of God united to the Bowels of Man, of Compassion to our Infirmities, and of a merciful Sentence, not remarking our Frailty, but our Wilfulness only?

HONOURING God in his Name, Attributes, Providences, was buried under general Neglect, and Omission; but restored and improved under Christianity, by farther more charming and ingratiating Displays of each of them, and from much more endearing Reasons, jointly and severally. So was *swearing religiously* by him, on solemn Occasions, degenerated into all manner of Evasions, Wantonnesses, and Prophanations, both among *Jews*, and *Heathens*; but restored to its Religion and Sacredness, by the strictest Prohibitions against prostituting that *Sacred Act* of Religion (necessary in the great Occasions, and Appeals of Society to the great Maker, and Partaker, and Supreme Umpire of it) to any ordinary Trifles of the Bullies, and Scoundrels of its

SINCERITY likewise towards God, so essential to any manner of Pretence of Religion towards him who seeth in Secret, was scandalously transformed by both of them into more outward Shew and Formality; but retrieved to true Devotion and Godliness, by the severest Condemnation of Hypocrisy, and from the Consideration *who is Inspector*, and will be Judge, and what must be the solemn Account we shall one Day make up.

THE natural and reasonable Duty of *Thanksgiving*, was fallen also into Disuse and Corruption among

among the *Nations*, and *Jews*, the most ungrateful of the two; for upon these Creatures, and Dependants upon the Favours and Indulgences of Heaven, the Heavenly Favours were always thrown away; and nothing but Adversity could affect, or make them understand any thing of God long. But what they performed *sometimes*, for *some Things* at the Cost and Charge of some external Oblation, devoted as an Eucharistical Sacrifice or Thank-offering, is cheapened to us at the low Rate, the No-Expence of the *Calves* of our *Lips*. With such Sacrifice are we bid to offer Praise, and rejoyce in the Lord, and give Thanks *always for all Things*; for *so is the Will of God in Christ Jesus*¹. So everlasting is this Debt, that it is our Employment in Heaven; and to confess ourselves, on Earth, unable to praise him worthily, is itself a sublime Act of Praise; whilst doing our best, with the best Member that we have for its Propagation, our poor Endeavours are dignified, and made pleasing in the Mediator. So welcome always to God is this Dependance upon him, and Insufficiency of ourselves, this constant Gratitude, Condition, and good Sense of a rational Creature towards his Creator, that the Distributions of Charity are particularly pressed, for the Reason, and for the Sake of the *abounding of many Thanksgivings unto him*²; and so rational a Pleasure, that the very best Mirth and Melody of Heart is referred to that chiefest Exultation³. And the manner of addressing it in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ⁴, is known only

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unto

¹ *1 Thes. v. 18.* *Eph. v. 20.*
² *2 Cor. ix. 12.*
³ *James v. 13.*
⁴ *Eph. v. 20.*

unto Christians; how the Acceptance is for his Sake alone, in whom alone God is well pleased.

Secondly, THE *Charity* which fulfils the Commandment to our *Neighbour*, is cultivated in Christianity, to the highest Pitch of Benevolence, and Beneficence: Enlarged from the narrow languishing Condition it lay under among the *Jews*, to the loving and doing Good to Enemies; and beyond the *Humanity* of the Heathens, who never extended it to Enemies as long as they continued such; and animated with the most forcible Example of *Godlike Virtue*, of one like ourselves, *going about, and doing good*, administering to the Welfare of all, though never so unworthy Objects.

AND if our Author had better understood the Command of *lending*, in some Circumstances, *hoping for nothing again*, he would not have censured it so often as a Defect in the Christian Morals, and a Want of Prudential Care of ourselves. Were we to lend to no one, but who was able to lend us again; they, who cannot lend again, and consequently most of all others in Want of Assistance to encourage their Industry and Honesty, would be unassisted; which was the Intention of the Precept to prevent. One would be a real Act of Beneficence; the other no better than bartering one Kindness for another, which is no Kindness at all.

He also shoots his Bolt against the *Israelites* borrowing Jewels of Gold, Silver, and Raiment of the *Egyptians*, and brands the not restoring, as
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an Act of Injustice. But he might have considered the previous Oppression and Injustice done to that laborious People, in making Use of their Labour, without paying them Wages; and, perhaps, that Loan barely satisfied Arrears: In that Case, borrowing where there was no Redress in Civil Courts, carried the Idea of a just Demand from those who were glad of the Opportunity of even presenting them with their choicest Things, to get rid of them, *that they might not all be dead Men*. However, as a *Civilian*, he might reason; supposing these Goods lent in Friendship, and those Friends presently after become enraged Enemies, bent upon their utter Destruction, and actually pursue them close for that Purpose; the Law of Self-Defence, which gives a Right to the Life of the Lenders, gives a Right to their Goods; if the Lenders had not otherwise been destroyed, and all after Pretence of Claim, with them, to the Honour of God, the Terror of Oppression, and the Vindication of Innocence.

Thirdly, THE Care of *ourselves* in the due Command of bodily Affections; the Knowledge of our Frame, what is the Dignity of our Nature, yet how defective in Ignorance, Unconstancy, and Pravity of Inclinations; for what we were made; wherein our true Happiness consists; how Sin, Evil, and Temptation, which so much obstruct it in the Time of our Probation, entered into the World; how very liable we are to Sin, yet how displeasing it is to God; where is our Remedy, and on whom we depend (insuperable to the Understanding of Heathens) are no where

taught or explained, or so much impressed upon our Observance, as in the Christian Institution; not to mention the Government of our Thoughts, the Spring-head of Sin; or the Avoidance in fact, of the Appearance of Evil.

BEFORE I leave the Religion of the End, I cannot but remark upon the Unfairness of our Author's Conduct; he is himself beholden to Authors for some of the best Things in his Book, without acknowledging it. Take one or two Instances concerning the Glory of God¹, which is borrowed from the *Religion of Nature delineated*², one of *Pompy and Caesar*³, without taking Notice from whom. But his Partiality, with respect to those he does cite, is notorious, and should be abhorred by every candid Writer and Reader, who has due Regard to a true Testimony. He gravely brings in *Tillotson, Barrow, Scott*, and innumerable more, as compleat Evidences on his Side, and out of them produces a Load of Quotations, which make up, in a manner, half his Book; to prove what? That the *Law of Nature is perpetual, founded in the Relation of Things, invariable, immutable, indispensible; that it is the main Scope of Christianity to further and promote it to due Effect*. Truths which no Divines, or thinking Christians ever deny'd, in a qualify'd Sense. To what Purpose then all this Parade of Witnesses? To countenance his bad Cause, if that could be done, by a Method that is worse; by suffering the Witnesses to speak but half the Truth—Let them be examined. Have they said nothing else in Behalf of Christianity, and
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¹ Pag. 32. ² Pag. 119.

³ Pag. 41, taken from the other Pag. 177.

of the *peculiar* Parts and Doctrines of it, which he dislikes and rejects? He knew in his Conscience they have. Why then suppress that which would have contradicted his half Citations, and Allegations *ex parte*, and confuted his pernicious Designs? Is it fair, is it tolerable in a Writer, to alledge one Part of a Sentence, and drop the other; or Part of a Book, and conceal the rest; because one makes for him, the other against him? At that rate, the best Authors, the Bible itself, may be lugged in to prove any thing. And, indeed, the latter, has fared the worst of all in his Hands. He ridiculously draws thence the Sword of the Spirit to stab Christianity with: But unfortunately for his unwieldy Hand, wounds only himself, and his own Judgment: He commonly arrests a Text, and makes it speak for him, in Contradiction to its Context, from whence he took it; and is every where very arch in catching at the Sound of Words, in order to persuade those, who are shallow enough to be affected with that, more than the real Meaning; and better pleased with Surfaces, than Solidity. But I shall trace him in those Particulars no farther, than they fall in with my Design. Which is next to proceed to the Religion of the MEANS.

C H A P.

See the Testimony of those three eminent Divines against our Author's Book, collected and referred to by the Bishop of Litchfield 2 Past. pag. 65.





C H A P. II.

The Religion of the MEANS.

I. OF REPENTANCE.

BOTH *Repentance* and *Prayer*, ever since Man found out many Devices for parting with the Uprightness he was created in, instantly became *Means* necessary to that State of Sin, Disorder, and Need, both in Body and Mind, which Mankind feel themselves labour under; for putting some Stop to Proclivity to Evil, and successfully improving the Struggle of the Law of the Mind against the Law of the Members, to the Approbation of God and Ourselves, in the Mastery of the former over the latter. This being the true State of Things, by the Confession of all Flesh, that we are Sinners, and that we are Lyars if we disown it: Just as Prayer as often as we want; so Repentance as soon as we sin, appears to be our Means, and our bounden Duty, in Reason as well as Revelation.

BUT though Repentance and Prayer became the constant Medicines for the Sins and Disorders of Man against God, and his own Reason, yet the Virtue and Efficacy of both of them, was owing to the unknown Mediator and Guardian of

of them, before he was manifested in the Flesh, and where he is not as yet revealed; as wherever he is, their Virtue is wholly to be derived, and applied through him. Repentance was no Part of the Religion of our primitive Constitution, but came in after, as the trembling Attendant upon *Guilt*. As soon as our Nature was fallen into a Proneness and a Liableness to that, and Sin, the first Effort of the human Mind for Recovery of itself to Wisdom and better Conduct, upon every wilful Transgression, when the Mind recoils upon itself with Penance, for having done amiss; Repentance is the only natural Consolation, and the best, *after* Sense, Reason can dictate, towards undoing what was wrong; and therefore the *first* Wisdom and Stand for endeavouring to do so no more. *Hierocles*, who was beholden to Christianity for many good Sentiments, says, ‘When we have fallen from Goodness or Probity, we recover it again by an ingenuous Repentance, submitting to the Divine Correction. For this Repentance is the very Beginning of Wisdom (Philosophy;) and the Avoidance of foolish Words and Works is the first Preparation to that Life which is not to be repented of.’ And consequently, in the natural Religion of sinful Man, it must be reckon’d the *first* leading Means for redintegrating our unconstant broken Obedience in those Particulars, which are the Religion of the End. For tho’ God is a *Rewarder of such as diligently*

seek

Ἐπὶ τοῦ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἐκπαιδεύων, οὐ γινώσκοντες αὐτὸν λαμβάνοντες, μεταμέλεια ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, καὶ δόξαν ἐπαρόδοτον εἰς ἀνθρώπους. Ἡ δὲ μετάνοια αὐτῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἔργων τε καὶ λόγων οὐγὴ, καὶ ἡ ἀμεταμέλητος ζῶσις ἡ σωτηρία ἐκτασθήσεται. Carm. Pyth. p. 167.

seek him, still Repentance on Man's Part, in Company with Faith that He is, and is a Rewarder, must be the previous Foundation of coming to him, and of diligently seeking to please him: Inasmuch as he regards not to *bear*, much less reward the *impenitent* Sinner; which is another Dictate of natural Reason.

Now, because Guilt naturally intimidates the Mind, and makes it diffident of the future Favour of the Party offended; that *Change of Mind* (*Μετάνοια*) returning from Evil to Good, and that *after-Care* (*Μεταμέλεια*) to do better, springing from Sorrow for what is past, (the meaning of Repentance in Scripture) both grow heartless and unactive, without an *effectual* Persuasion of Reconcilement and Forgiveness of Sin; therefore Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator of Reconciliation, presents itself, to improve, move, and inspire it with lively Powers, and an actual setting about it.

ACCORDINGLY the first Knowledge of a Saviour or Jesus, is revealed for that very purpose, *He shall save his People from their Sins*¹; and the Knowledge of Salvation given to them is *for the Remission of their Sins*²; the *Word*, the *Way*, the *Gospel*³ of Salvation, all mean the same Thing. The true Notion of the *Blessing* of a Saviour, preaching Peace or Remission of Sins, consists in *turning away every one of us from our Iniquities*⁴.

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¹ *Matth. i. 21.*

² *Luk. i. 77.*

³ Ἐπαγγελίαν ἡ λέξις, διὃν ἀγγέλλει ἡμῖν περὶ σωτηρίας καὶ χάριτος ἔχοντα, ταῦτά ἐστιν ἀγαθὰ, ἀφέντων ἀμαρτιῶν, δικαιοσύνην, εὐδοσίαν εἰς ἕαυτούς, καὶ ὑποδοίαν Θεοῦ. Theophylact's Pref. to St. Matth. apud Mill. T. Gospel-God's Word or good-Saying.

⁴ *Act. iii. 26.*

This is the *Peace of God which passeth all Understanding*; or surpasseth, and is better than all other Understanding and Knowledge; *the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God*. This is the *Kingdom of God, of Christ, of Heaven*, i. e. for bringing us thither; a Kingdom of Reconciliation, and Restoration of Mankind, or Sinners to eternal Life, by taking away Sin, which was the Bar to the Entrance into it; bringing *Glory to God in the Highest, on Earth Peace, good Will towards Men*. This is the mediatorial Kingdom, not of this World, in which Christ is King, the *Way, the Truth, and the Life*; for this Cause, he tells *Pilate*, he came into the World to bear Witness of *that Truth*, that he was the *sent* of God, and *came from him*, to be the Kingly Mediator and Saviour of the World; a *good Confession* as the Apostle calls it.

THE Laws of which Kingdom are not the old Law of Works, of absolute perfect Obedience to the Law of the Mind, of God, and Reason; but the Law of the Righteousness of *Faith*; accounting that Obedience, which is sincere, zealous of good Works, to the utmost of our Power, though mix'd with Frailties and Defects, to be equivalent to an exact adequate Performance. And therefore that Kingdom is said to consist in that *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*^{*}, which flow from that practical Belief of Forgiveness of Sins through *Christ*; and to be *within* those who believed it, whilst he was speaking to them. The *Holy Ghost shedding abroad* the Love of God, and the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus the Mediator, *upon the Hearts* of the

^{*} Rom. xiv. 17.

the first Converts, confirmed the Truth of it by divers Miracles. Which being purposely wrought for ascertaining the Truth of the glad Tidings of Salvation, that *Remission of Sins* was to be had in *Christ Jesus* only; to say deliberately, that these undeniable Miracles were Imposture, or that That great Sinner *Belzebug* had any Hand in them, was the same Thing as to say, the Thing proved, viz. the saving Grace and Favour of God promulged to the World, for remitting Sins in that Method, was a Cheat and Imposture. That made the *Sin*, but more properly *Blasphemy* against the *Holy Ghost*; and made it also *irremissible*, not to be forgiven in this World, nor that which is to come¹; because it amounts to the denial of the Remission of Sins, or Man's Salvation. And if any fall away after they have received that Belief which accompanies Salvation, and were illuminated (as at the first in Baptism) by the *Holy Ghost*, and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, as well as Remission of Sins, they not only tread under foot the Son of God, and put him to an open Shame, as being a Deceiver; but they do despite unto the Spirit of Grace. And it is as impossible to renew them again to Repentance², as it is to induce a Man to repent of his Sins, who does not believe the Remission of them.

So long and so firmly, by the way, was this capital Blessing of the Gospel receiv'd in Belief, that it was as needless to make it an Article of a Christian Creed, as to have made the Gospel itself an Article of it: Nor was it inserted, till it was denied in some Respects by the *Basiliidians*, *Montanists*, but especially the *Novatians*. Vid. *Crit. Hist. of the Creed*, p. 361, 380. *Novatian* allowed

¹ Mark iii. 28.

² Heb. vi. 4. x. 26.

allowed of no Remission of Sins committed after Baptism ; for which he deservedly got the Character of an *Enemy of Mercy, a Murderer of Repentance, a Doctor of Pride, a Corrupter of Truth, and a Destroyer of Charity.* Cyp. Ep. 57. That Comfort and Joy in believing, the first Churches are said to exult in, and receive the Word with Joy: Upon the same Account are we bid to rejoice in the Lord always, and again to rejoice¹.

So comfortless was the Heathen World before the Salvation of the Gospel visited them ; so doubtful were the best, so dead and desponding were the Generality, as to the Practice of Repentance, having no Certainty of the Remission of Sins ; that they contentedly sat down in their Darkness, and cover'd themselves with its Shadow and with the Repetition of their Sins ; *who knowing the Judgment of God (that they who do such Things are worthy of Death) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them².* For they who happen'd to reason right from the Dictates of natural Conscience, concerning the Displeasure of God for such wicked Actions, were otherwise instructed and overpersuaded by their Teachers, the *Philosophers*, that there was no Displeasure or Anger in God for the Offences of Men. So Laëtant L. de Ira, passim, is positive not only as to the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks*, (to whose Principles it was exactly agreeable) but, *Ita omnes Philosophi de Ira consentiunt.* And with respect to the contrary Opinion, viz, *Ut irascatur Deus, a Philosophis nec susceptum est unquam, nec aliquando defensum ;* that God could be angry, was never either

¹ Phil. iv. 4.

² Rom. i. 32.

either embraced or defended by them; and at last gives his Opinion, *qui sine ira Deum esse credunt, dissolvunt omnem Religionem*. If God is not angry with Sinners, what need of Repentance and forsaking Sin? Or what Occasion to fear him?

THUS neglecting Repentance, and the Fear of God, which is the Beginning of Wisdom and Religion, they went on greedily in Iniquity, till their measure was so full, as to be given up to a reprobate Mind. Another of the *Apologists* says, What has *Cicero*, what has *Seneca* (who have wrote most divinely of other Duties and Offices) written of Repentance? But of Repentance they knew no more than this, that it was, *Passio quædam animi veniens de offensa sententiæ prioris*. *Cicero* declares the Opinion of all the Philosophers, Off. L. III. Sect. 27. *Hoc commune est omnium Philosophorum, nunquam nec irasci Deum, nec nocere*; that God was never *Angry*, nor would he ever hurt Men. In short, the Heathen World being without a known Covenant, were without a known Promise; and being ignorant of *Jesus* and the *Resurrection*, which brought the Knowledge of the Remission of Sins, and Life and Immortality to light, together with the absolute Certainty of a future Judgment, they not knowing the manner how it was granted, were without Hope of it; which left them in a manner without God in the World, i. e. as to any Repentance towards him. They were fallen, as the Apostle tells the most learned of them, into a general Ignorance of it; as well as of the Object of Worship: Their Case, however, was not desperate, it was pitiable, and therefore engagingly address'd them, that the times of
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that Ignorance, God winked at, but now commands all Men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a Day, &c. by that Man Jesus Christ.

HENCE, upon the very first Commencement of preaching the Gospel, by the *Fore-runner John*, the first Disciples to Evangelical Repentance, were made in the *Belief of him that should come after*. And after our Lord had wrought out our Pardon by his Death, Resurrection and Ascension, in all the Preaching and Writing of his Apostles, where Repentance is urged, it is never once urged alone: But either, where Faith in Christ was first received, which previously supposed that Foundation; or, where it was not as yet embraced, recommended always for converting *Jews and Gentiles*, in Conjunction with being baptized in the Name of *Jesus*, or *Lord Jesus*, for *Remission of Sins*¹; which necessarily includes Faith in him as the Mediator of Reconciliation. The *Apostle* particularly enumerates it together with Baptism in his Catalogue of the Fundamentals of the Doctrine of Christ; wherein the *Hebrew Converts* were not so steady as they should be²; or else in Conjunction with his being risen, and ascended to Heaven, to be a *Prince and a Saviour*, to give Repentance to Israel, and Forgiveness of Sin³; or, his being the Judge of the World⁴. And St. Paul's *showing to them of Damascus and Jerusalem, and all the Coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do Works meet for Repentance*⁵, was joined with the Preaching of *Jesus*.⁶ To all Converts we find it inseparably urged,

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¹ *Act.* ii. 37, 38. iii. 19. ² *Heb.* vi. 1, 2. ³ *Act.* v. 31.
⁴ *Act.* xvii. 31. ⁵ xxvi. 20. ⁶ v. 30.

with *Faith* in *Jesus*, or *Belief* of the *Gospel*, which is the same thing. This signifying, that Repentance was impracticable, where there is no Persuasion of the Remission of Sins; because that Faith, or Persuasion of the Goodness of God in *Christ*, reconciling the World to himself, is the Motive and moral Cause of it: Which Cause being a Revelation from the Gift of God, the Effect, Repentance, may very justly, as it sometimes is affirmed, be his Gift: For the *Gentile* had no Motives to Repentance; and the *Jew* none in Comparison of the *Christian*; and therefore to give them such Motives, was the same Thing as to give them both Repentance. And what was the Effect of preaching Remission of Sins to the *Gentiles* in the Name of *Jesus*? The *Jews* themselves are forced to confess it, that God had granted to the *Gentiles* REPENTANCE unto Life, *Act. x. 18.* implying that Doctrine to be the Fountain of Repentance.

THAT Grace of God being granted, and as far as it appeared to all Men, REPENTANCE becomes an able, well-promoted, and most encouraged Undertaker of the Work of forsaking Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly, &c. The persuading Men into the Remission of Sins in the Method of God in *Christ*, is the Keys of that Kingdom; and to be appointed to the Ministry of that gracious manifold Word of Exhortation, is the same Thing, as to have the Keys appointed, or given for opening the Kingdom of Heaven to Believers in *Jesus*. That eternal Life, consequent upon Sins being remitted through him, may be our Hope; and eternal Death, the Consequence

quence of their being *retained*, may strike our Fear, with such a Force, as to divorce us from our Sins.

AND because true Repentance not to be repented of, includes in it a Return to that universal Obedience which God and his Constitution of Things have commanded; called therefore *Conversion*, or *turning to the Lord*; *renewing of the Mind*, *putting on the new Man*, *the new Creature*, *Regeneration*, *new Birth*, *newness of Life*; and forasmuch as Faith in our Lord *Jesus Christ* touching Remission of Sins, gives Nerves and Motion to that Repentance, which sets all the Wheels of Duty in regular Motion, and puts the whole Course of a good Conversation in Order; for bringing forth Fruits meet for Repentance; to induce Men to repent, and do the *first Works* of natural Religion, to the utmost of their Power, by the Means and Motives of the Gospel, is the great Business of the Gospel. The Contents of *Christ's own* preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God is accordingly summed up, in preaching, *repent ye, and believe the Gospel*¹; and *St. Paul*, according to the Commission he received from *Jesus*, appearing to him from Heaven, *Acts*. xxiv. 18, &c. to open the Eyes of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, *that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins*, and Inheritance among them, which are sanctify'd by Faith; shewed first unto them of *Damascus*, and at *Jerusalem*, and then to the *Gentiles*, *that they should repent and turn to God, and do Works meet for Repentance*, in Virtue of that Faith. This

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¹ Mark i. 15. Matt. iv. 17.

is the Account he gives of his own Preaching and Doctrine, in all Truth and Soberness, before *King Agrippa*, and the whole Court. At another Time, reckoning up the whole Council of God in manifesting his Son in the Flesh, and rehearsing before the *Elders of Ephesus*, the most material Things of that Gospel, which he, for his Part, preached with such zealous Diligence and Fidelity, as to be free from the Blood of all Men, by his holding nothing back of what was indispensably necessary both to *Jews and Greeks*, sums up, in *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*. No wonder, therefore, if *that Faith* so often stands for the Christian Religion in general, seeing it is the principal Instrument for carrying on its Designs for promoting Repentance, which promotes the Endeavours after, and Practice of all good Works.

AND here it may not be unuseful to offer a Solution of that implicated perplexing Question, *What is true Religion?* What must I do to be saved? Because the true Answer will, at the same Time, account for the different Descriptions, and seeming Catalogues of Fundamentals, and Abridgments of the Contents of Christianity, as they occur in Holy Scripture. The *Question* is not one, but many; even a *Legion*, if one was to count by the Number of Answers given to it; affording rather a negative Knowledge what it is not, than positively what it is; the pregnant Occasion of Confusion and Wrangle, and of being tossed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine! And wrong Apprehensions and Mistakes must continue, till that negative Manner of resolving

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is changed into some positive, satisfactory Account of it; which is easily attainable both in general, and particular, if we would but measure it by, and apply it to its Ends and Designs in general, and particular.

THE Question cannot be put with respect to the Religion of the END, because that is no Question, all are agreed: When it is asked therefore, What is true Religion? It must be understood only, *What is the true Religion* of the MEANS? Now the Design of the Holy Scriptures, or Christianity in general, being to make us wise unto Salvation, and recover us from a vain Conversation to the Happiness and Perfection of our Nature; from an accusing Disobedience to God's Laws, and consequently fearful Apprehensions of Punishment, to that sincere Compliance we are capable of, which may make us secure of his Favour, and of a Recompence; by removing all Hindrances both in Knowledge and Practice, and affording all necessary *Aids, Motives, and Helps*; it must follow, that there are just so many Designs of Christianity in particular, as there are Imperfections and Hindrances in Knowledge, and Practice, to be removed and amended; and as there are Helps and Motives wanting to effect it, with regard to the Religion of the END, and of the MEANS. It must therefore be, as it is, variously set forth and described in its Designs in Holy Writ, according to the Variety of those Exigencies, and Defects both in the Religion of the End, and the Means: As if, whenever it applies itself in either of those Cases, to any People, it was its *main* and *only Business* to redress that Defect, or supply

the wanted Motive. To put the Question in general, 'What is true Religion?' When the Want and Application is only in particular (and almost always it is put in Reference to Particulars only, to some few or more Contents of it :) It is much such a Question, as what is Law? or what is Physick?

To the former, suppose one to answer, 'The best or truest System of *Law* is that which orders every Thing that is right, by a competent Authority, for the Good of the Whole':—Though that is, perhaps, a right Account in general, forasmuch as all Laws are resolved into it, and from thence derive their Reason, and Powers of obliging. But notwithstanding it ought to be esteemed a satisfactory adequate Answer in general to such a general Question; it seldom answers the Mind of the Asker, because he generally means, according to the Country he has been bred in, and the Laws and Customs he has been inured to, almost nothing else, but the Law of his own Country. And as often as he means that, the Way to bring him in Satisfaction, is first to ask him what is his Case of Wrong, which he would have the Law accountable to him for, it being the Business of all Law to prevent and redress Wrong. And then as he sheweth his Matter, let him be answer'd accordingly, by shewing what the Law is in that Case; how particularly it distinguishes his Right, and with what Penalties enforces the Recovery of it; and that will be the most pertinent and contenting Answer to such a Querist.—Again, to the other Question, What is *Physick*? If one should reply, 'It is a Profession, undertaking to cure all Distempers, curable': It may be,
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he utters the whole Truth : Still the Querist finds himself nothing the better for that general Truth ; because either he himself, or some of his Friends aileth something, and he would gladly know a Remedy. If that was his Meaning, (and most likely it was) *viz.* What Cure and Assistance can Physick bring to me, or my Neighbour ? The ready and the only good Answer to such a Patient is, first to find out, by asking proper Questions, what his Ailment is, and then prescribe the proper Medicine accordingly. And as that is *true* Law, and Proceedings of Law, which in all Cases answers its Intendment, in rectifying what is wrong among Subjects, by consulting the Good of the Whole : And as that is *true* Physick which corresponds to its Undertaking in endeavouring the most effectual Means, for curing all Diseases curable : So, in the Application, that is Religion, and that is *true Religion*, which is best framed and adapted to obtain its obligatory wholesome Designs upon voluntary rational Creatures, by redressing all that is wrong, and wanting ; and healing what is disorderly in their Conversation ; and inducing them by the most powerful Means and Motives, to discharge their Obligations in the three Branches of Relation which God, and the Constitution of Things, have placed them under ; to pursue the Religion of the End, and use the Religion of the Means, in order to perform it with greater Care, and to the greatest Perfection, that it may conclude in so much greater Happiness to the Performer.

BUT then considering again, in *particular*, that when Christianity enter'd the World, Mens Conversation was mixed up of some little Good

and very much Evil, some Truth with a great deal of Error; and none, perhaps, so compleatly wicked as to have no one Virtue, or Seed of good in them (that Character, I presume, belonging to none but the Devil, *the Evil one.*) If a Mixture of Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, then the Evil and the Error only wanted to be purged away, and the contrary Good and Truth to be planted in their room, by those Applications that can best effect it. Thus Truth is serviceable to Good, in driving out Error, as often as it is the Author of Evil. And if Men and Christians are still at this Day, and ever will be, a *Miscellany* of Right and Wrong, Sense and Reason, more or less; partly sinful, partly virtuous; and they who have the most Virtues have them in the Allay of Human Imperfection: And if this is the undoubted State of the Case; What Thing else, or what Thing better *in particular*, can the Christian Religion be? Than to supply every Lack of Virtue, and of the Truth that has a Tendency to promote that Obedience, and remove every Sin and Irregularity in Practice, and every Error also in Judgment, so far as it has an Influence on the other. To touch upon our Duty and Obligations in the *aforesaid Distribution.*

IN the Religion of the End, as to *ourselves*; Is *Humility*, the previous Ground of all Instruction and necessary Knowledge inceptive of Discipleship wanting? You find it the Business of Christianity, in its Endeavours to cure us of all our Maladies and Disorders, to supply that Defect almost in the *first Place*: For our Lord came not to call the Righteous, such as conceited them-

themselves such, like our Author, but Sinners to Repentance; which Text he strangely perverts, pag. 42. as if his 12 Disciples were the most scandalous Sinners in the World. Thus begins the first Words of our blessed Master's Sermon, *Blessed is the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* For they only will learn God's Ways, how they abound in Wisdom and Prudence in his Kingdom of Reconciliation, or Method of saving Men; He therefore only dwelleth with those of a low and contrite Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite ones; the Pride therefore of rejecting that Method must needs go before Destruction.

THE Author of *Christianity, &c.* pag. 307. derides this, as if Christianity was an Enemy to the Rich, as such, and to all the honest industrious Methods of becoming so. But that is unwarily writing Reflections on his own Understanding, and throwing out Reproaches which revert upon himself. Is there no Difference between poor in *Spirit*, and poor in outward Circumstances? He could not but know that the Text he cites from *St. Luke*, is to be interpreted by *St. Matthew*. The great Positiveness and Vanity of this Author, as an Author, diffuses itself throughout his Performance, till he comes to his last Paragraph, which has more of the Sneer than any Seriousness in it. The manifest Scope of his Book is to extol and magnify the *Sufficiency* of his own, and his Disciples Reason, as a Guide to Salvation and Happiness, independant of any external Revelation from God; which deserves no better than to be excluded from future Reception, and banish'd from the Place, where it is receiv'd, as *unreasonable*;

nable; though in its practical, which is its very and only Design, it exhibits nothing contrary to Reason; as *partial*, because not as yet communicated to *all*; and he has spared no Pains to save *Missioners* the trouble, that it never may; as *unworthy* of God, commanding in his Name *arbitrary* Things; as *dishonourable* to him, having no tendency to promote the Honour of God, or the Good of Men, but the contrary; that it is every way needless, and in all respects useless; that Revelation and Reveries are synonymous Terms; that Superstition and Enthusiasm are both the Cause and Effect of all supposed Revelation from Heaven. But he is so unhappy and inconsistent, as to wound himself and his Scheme through the Sides of Christianity. He every where makes these the reigning Propositions of his Book. That *natural and reveal'd Religion only differ as to the manner of their being communicated*; that Christianity is neither more or less than the *Republication of the Law of Nature*. If then, they are so much the same, in his own great Judgment, does not all those Reproaches recoil and stick to his natural Religion, the Idol he adores, and has set up to pull down Christianity with? If these are the best Fruits of the arrogant, scornful *Riches* of his Spirit, it is left to God, what Share he has in the Blessedness of the Kingdom of Heaven; but this may with Charity be affirm'd of the Memory he has left upon Earth from this Performance, that he is a poor, dishonest, inconsistent Writer, which will more fully appear in the Sequel. But to return.

Is there wanting a Disposition to *mourn* for our Sins? Or a due *Desire* of the Knowledge and Practice

Practice of all *Righteousness*? Or the *Purity* of being inwardly and sincerely religious? Or *Patience* under unjust *Persecution* and *Calumny* for the Sake of Christ? They are all recommended and promoted with a *Blessing*. The *Blessing* of the two first, to mourn for the Want, and to hunger and thirst with the Desire of *Righteousness*, is as obvious, as that *Righteousness* itself is a *Blessing*. The *Blessing* of the third is undeniable, I mean the *pure in Heart*: Because, as the first Degree of Virtue is to abstain from evil Deeds, and do good ones; the second Degree, and that called *Perfection*, or *perfect Man*, to refrain from ill Words, and speak that which is good to the Use of edifying; the most perfect and blessed of all, is to keep the Heart with all Diligence, to the Delight of nothing but good Thoughts, and expelling all evil ones. With respect to the last, the Apostles were so blessed, that they rejoiced in their Afflictions; and exhorted others to count it all Joy when they fell into the like: No heathen Virtue could ever inspire Joy, it could go no farther than make it tolerable.

As to our *Neighbour*; is *Meekness*, *Mercy*, *Peace-making* neglected? You have them enforced, one with the greatest Happiness on Earth, the second with an high Reward in Heaven and Earth, the third with the highest Encomium; Is, as in other Places, Charity to our Brother very cold, and little minded? Then *Faith* is only *Christian Faith* when it works by Love; the End of the Commandment is Charity; Love is the fulfilling

1 *Trin.* i. 5. The *παράκλησις*, which signifies in the N. T. a Commandment, with a particular Charge, going along with it, upon a particular Occasion.

filling of the Law; forasmuch as it promotes all the Good, and prevents all the Evil to our Neighbour that is in one's Power; it is therefore an excellent Summary of that eternal Law and Right which is founded in the Nature of Things, and is the Root of all Civil Laws¹. But as Civil Laws can only provide against Mischief from known Causes, and Mischief does continually arise from unforeseen Causes and Circumstances, which occasions so many new Laws; all that the whole Multitude of them can effect, is only to lessen Evil; whilst this Law of Charity by promoting the inward Principle, would totally prevent Wrong and Evil, which is the End of all Law². This is in St. *John*³ sometimes the *old* Commandment from God, and the Nature of Things⁴; sometimes the *new*; *because the Darknes is past, and the true Light now shineth.*

THE Tradition of the Scribes had so corrupted the true Interpretation, and mutilated the Righteousness due unto the Royal Law; that our blessed Lord, by setting aside their destroying Glosses, which set aside the Peoples Obedience, making the Commandment of God of none Effect; and by re-asserting it to its true Scope and Purpose, then lost, may be said to be a *new* Legislator (in the Authority of *I say unto you*) of the *Decalogue*; especially of the Law of loving one another, as it is enforced, and exemplified in the Gospel.

MORE

¹ *Radix Justitiæ, & omne fundamentum Aequitatis.* Laët.

² Νόμος, ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, giving unto every one their due.

³ 1 *John*. xi. 7, 8.

⁴ Called in many Places ἐν νόμῳ καὶ ἐν χάριτι; and distinguished from the Laws and Precepts of *Moses*, by being ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως, *Mark* x. 6.

MORE particularly still; Is a candid Opinion commonly absent from the Judgment we make of our Brother? *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned.*

Is the *Jewish* Nation remarkably defective in the true *Ends* of Sacrifice, and instituted Parts of Religion, stopping short, and placing the *all* of Religion in such Things? Then their last Prophet *Malachi* opportunely sums up, prefers, and urges the disregarded *Ends*; *What does the Lord require, but to do justly, love Mercy, and walk humbly with, &c.* the Lord would have Mercy, Justice, Humility, and not Sacrifice.

ARE the *Jewish* Converts offensive to the *Gentile*, through a mistaken Zeal for a *Necessity* of their being circumcised also, in order to be Christians? Then, at a solemn Assembly of the Apostles and Elders, in Opposition to such an unchristian Opinion,, *Why tempt ye God, to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Disciples, which neither, &c.* and the Sentence is, *not to trouble them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.* Are some of the Customs and Indulgences of the latter, a Stumbling-block to the former, who were in a contrary Sentiment, and an Occasion of not accompanying with them, not yet relinquish'd after their Conversion? Then it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and the Apostles, to lay upon them no greater Burthen than these necessary Things, to abstain from Meats offered to Idols, from Blood, and from Things strangled, and from Fornication, from which, &c. *Acts xv.* It was necessary to forbid them Fornication, that they might relinquish

quish their Heathenish Notion of the Innocency of it; and *occasionally necessary* to prohibit the other, for a temporary, charitable Compliance with the converted Jew's unconquerable Abhorrence of those Things; who, as long their Temple was yet standing, and Sacrifices there still continued, could not be reconciled to the Use of *Blood* in any thing but Sacrifice; which ceasing with the Temple, the End of the Prohibition ceased.

Is *Relief* often forgot to the distressed, when it is in the Power of those who have received the Faith, and make their boast of that, and of hearing the Word? Then Christianity, in order to redress such a defiling of the Word, by despising of the poor², and to persuade the better to the Virtue that was wanting, delights to represent and urge itself by the Apostle, to be that *pure and undefiled Religion, which visits the Fatherless and the Widow in their Affliction*, as carefully, as to keep ourselves unspotted from the World³. If the Religion of any Believer tolerated him in those Defects, it could not be pure and undefiled, however good in other Respects. It was needless for St. James to enumerate Faith in Christ, in his then Account of the Christian Religion; because those he wrote to, actually misplaced the *Whole* of Christianity, in a mere believing, without those becoming Works, regardless of relieving Charity and personal Purity; resting in the Means instead of the End, and never applying the Means to its appointed End; their Faith was impure and defiled: To such Abusers of their Faith and Profession, it was therefore wise to omit,

¹ James xi. 14. i. 23.

² xi. 6. ³ i. 27.

omit, and superfluous to mention, the Necessity of Faith, of which they had so much already; but of such Works which they egregiously wanted; grounding his Argument upon an establish'd Maxim, *he that offendeth in one Point is guilty of all*; as if he had said, Morality in all its Branches being the End of Faith, he that allows himself in transgressing one Branch of that Religion of the End, does not answer the End of Christ's Religion, and therefore is guilty of deviating from the whole Design of it. Therefore Faith is not the less necessary, for his omitting it in his Description of pure and undefiled Religion, before God and the Father. For St. Paul, and all the Preachers, had before sufficiently insisted upon the Necessity of Faith, where it was *not* receiv'd, as the only Way whereby *Jews* or *Gentiles* were to be saved.

AND to the end that so needful, and excellent a Piece of Humanity, and natural Religion, might never be forgot, the Judge of all the Earth, not as if he would not likewise judge every Man according to his *other* Works; for as the Law of Christ is the Law of the best Means to the best End; and as they who have sinned without that Law, shall not be judged by that Law; it follows, that we who sin under, are to be judged by it; and consequently for wilfully failing in the Means, as well as the End. And as Remission of Sins by the Mediator, is the great Doctrine of the Gospel attested by the Father, and by the Miracles of the *Holy Ghost*; to impeach that Doctrine, or to say those attesting Miracles were wrought by the Evil Spirit, is the unpardonable Blasphemy against the *Holy Ghost*; and

and those *idle Words* (according to the Subject Matter) which our Lord says shall be brought to account at the Day of Judgment, *Mat. xii. 36.* The Judge, I say, *particularly* mentions, that he would be *sure* to take an Account of *that*, and not omit it. For what signifies mentioning the Means to them that know them, if the *End* is unanswer'd? Accordingly to make it the more memorable to our Observance, he draws up a solemn Scheme or Representation, how the *Christian* Professor will come off at the last Day, upon the foot of performing, or neglecting *that* Virtue; as may be seen, *Matth. xxv. 31, &c.* From that Draught of the general Judgment, there is no reason to think that other Works done in the Body will not be brought to light; but only that it was the Mind of Christ to enforce, and it is certainly the strongest Way of enforcing; much like the restraining from Censure and rash Judgment of others; *judge and ye shall be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned*; or the *Psalmist* promising, *Psal. xv.* a Place in God's holy Hill to those that walk uprightly, speaking the Truth from their Heart, doing no Evil to, nor taking up a Reproach against their Neighbour, respecting the Servants of God, and performing their Oaths. An Adjudication to every Christian that he will most *assuredly* take an Account of our Lives in Relation to that Duty in particular; to reward the Performance, even though the Doer had forgot it; and punish the contrary Disobedience, of those especially, who are his Disciples. It is passing Sentence according to that *universal Verdict*, *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another*; suitable to that well known Maxim
of

of the Law, *be that loveth God, loves his Brother also.* And to what Purpose would it be to put Faith in himself, and the Advantage of that Divine Means for loving God and our Neighbour, into the Sentence of any but those who willfully contemned it? As to those who were acquainted with it, and employed it not to that Purpose, it can be mentioned only by way of Aggravation, since the End is left unanswer'd. He will renounce all Acquaintance with them, who pretend any with him, and yet learn'd or considered him so little, as to neglect a Duty which Humanity itself teaches; especially knowing withal, what a peculiar and *personal* Consideration he enforces it with, by telling those that perform'd it, they did it to *Him*; and those who omit it, that they as good as dared to omit it to himself in *Person*; and therefore should be punish'd according to their Deservings, without Mercy, for shewing none, even towards him, who was profuse of his Blood and Life for their Sakes.

THUS again with respect to both those Duties, to our Brother, and Ourselves; in order to dissuade the better from the prevailing Vices (before mentioned) of bitter Envy, Strife, Vain-glory, and lying against the Truth, Christianity puts on the Style and Description, as if that was the whole Stress of its Commission, of being that *Wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy* ¹.

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AND

¹ James iii. 17.

AND where Temperance and Justice were notoriously deficient, as in *Felix* and *Drusilla*, desirous to hear of the Faith of Christ; the Faith of Christ by its great Apostle reasons of *them*, and their Necessity, if they would in any measure become Christians, *Acts* xxiv. 24. So the Forerunner St. *John* told the Soldiers, Men of Violence and Mutiny, what they were to do; *to be content with their Pay, and to do Violence to no Man*. Is there a Distinction of *clean* and *unclean* Meat and Drink subsisting, and Dissention, and Discord, and every evil Work thence arising? Then the *Kingdom of God consists not in Meat and Drink; but Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*.

Lastly, with reference to our Duty to God, true Religion is abbreviated, in *fearing him and keeping his Commandments, which is the whole Duty of Man*; in *loving the Lord our God with all our Hearts, &c.* which is the first and great Commandment.

AND where the Belief of the one true God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, is not receiv'd, or is corrupted with Idolatrous Worship of Idol Mediators, the Business of Christianity, and its Professors, (as it was the Apostles in the Case of the Idolatrous *Lystrians*, *Acts* xiv. 15. and *Athenians*, xvii.) should ever be to remove that false Foundation in the first Place, before *Jesus Christ*, the true Mediator, is laid, as the chief Corner-Stone.

II. IF we proceed to the *Means*, so great Stress is laid upon Repentance, as if it stood for the whole. *That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations*¹. *Repent and believe the Gospel*². *Went out and preached that Men should repent*³. *Except ye repent ye shall perish*⁴. *Repent and be converted that your Sins, &c.*⁵ *Now commandeth all Men to repent*⁶.

THE like is laid upon the Resurrection of Christ from the dead⁷: *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine Heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*. Because his Rising from the dead is essential to support our Belief of having Justification, or Forgiveness of Sins before God: From which Belief followeth that Repentance unto Life, which worketh the *Righteousness of Faith*, i. e. (as opposed to the Righteousness of the Law) sincere Obedience to God's Law, and Acceptance with him, under a full Persuasion, that we have Salvation or Pardon of Sin thro' Christ; who is the *End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth*. And because his Death and Resurrection are the two Pillars, having for their Basis the Faith of his being the *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, which support the Belief of Remission of Sins; therefore the same Apostle elsewhere⁸, delivers as he had received the Import-

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tance

¹ Luke xxiv. 47.² Mark i. 15. ³ vi. 12. ⁴ Luk. xiii. 3.⁵ Act. v. 19. ⁶ Act. xvii. 30. ⁷ Rom. x. 9.⁸ 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

tance of them *ἡ πρώτη* among the *first* Things. In another Place¹, the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ are laid down in more Particulars: *Repentance from dead Works, Faith towards God; the Doctrine of Baptisms, of laying on of Hands, of the Resurrection, and of eternal Judgment.* And because the Belief of *Jesus Christ* being equally Son of God and Son of Man, maintains the Faith of his being the *completest* Mediator; and the Belief of such a Mediator's dying for our Sins, and rising, and sitting at the Right Hand of God to mediate and intercede for our Justification, best secures and maintains the Belief of Remission of Sins, which animates Repentance and all the Religion of the Means, which restores our Obedience to, and Performance of the Religion of the End.

HENCE *Faith* in Christ being the principal Mover, or vital Principle of all the rest, so often occurs as a summary of the Gospel, or true Religion. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved²: God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.— He that believeth in the Son, hath everlasting Life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life³: This is Life eternal [or the Knowledge of the Way how Sins are remitted] to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent⁴; ye believe in God, believe also in me⁵, as the only appointed Mediator of Redemption⁶ and Intercession.⁷* The Words whereby *Cornelius* the first Gentile Convert,

¹ *Heb.* vi. 6. ² *Act.* xvi. 30, 31. ³ *Job.* iii. 16, 36.—The like affirmed *Cb.* v. 24.—vi. 47. ⁴ *Job.* v. 12. ⁵ *Job.* xvii. 3. ⁶ *Cb.* xiv. 1. ⁷ *Ver.* 27. ⁸ *xiv.* 13, &c.

Convert, and his House were to be saved, in his Belief of a God, were those accompanying the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*; *Peace by him*, that he is *Lord of all*, that he *died, rose again*, is *Judge of Quick and Dead*, and that *whosoever believeth in him, hath Remission of Sins*¹.

LASTLY, Is the Knowledge of what *excludes* out of the Kingdom of Heaven wanting? All hypocritical Outside Religion, like the *Scribes and Phariſees*.² The Pride and Unteachableness of Human Reason³; the imputing the Miracles of Christ to an evil Spirit⁴; the refusing to embrace the Christian Faith where offered⁵; the resisting legal Authority for resisting Sake⁶; they who continue to be unrighteous, Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, effeminate Abusers of themselves with Mankind, Thieves, Covetous, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners⁷, and the Doers of Evil, out of a Principle that Good may come of it⁸.

SEEING then that every one of these, the Religion of the End, and of the Means, are necessary, each in their Order; and seeing it is the Method of particular Parts of Scripture, (the Whole whereof is the entire Rule of our Judgment in Divine Things) to inculcate most the Necessity of particular Doctrines, where, and to what Persons they were wanted most; it will by no Means follow, that because one or more Particulars are made necessary in one or more Places, that it therefore abates any Thing of the due Necessity

¹ *Act. x. 36.* compared with *xi. 14.*

² *Matth. v. 20.* ³ *xviii. 3.* ⁴ *Mark iii. 30.* ⁵ *xvi. 16.*

⁶ *Rom. xiii. 2.* ⁷ *1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.* ⁸ *Rom. iii. 8.*

cessity of other Particulars in other Places: As if Charity, for Instance, being one Branch of the Religion of the End, was the *one Thing necessary*, or the only Inquisition by which we were to be tried at the last Day; or because it is greater than Faith (as every End is with respect to the Means) that therefore we may disuse the Means, and propose to attain the End without them: Or, that Faith was a compleatly sufficient Necessary of itself; though it worketh not by Love; tho' it attaineth not its End, good Works. For that is a Way of applying the *entire* Rule by Halves, or in the Phrase of our Author, *here a bit, and there a bit*: Setting one Scripture against another, and putting asunder what God has joined together.

WHEREAS the *general* governing Design of the whole Scripture, is to supply *all* Wants, and redress *whatever* is wrong and defective: It is *profitable* in setting forth what is *true* in all the Principles and *Doctrines* of Godliness; *for Reproof* of what is false and erroneous therein; *for Correction* in whatever is irregular and bad in Morals; *for Instruction* in whatever is good and Praise-worthy, and practicable in *Righeousness*; 2 Tim. iii. 16. and so making *wise unto Salvation*; and so harmoniously *furnishing all good Works*, and requiring an universal Obedience to the Religion of the End, and of the Means. Mean Time, it is the *particular* Design of this or that Scripture, to urge the Necessity of this End, or that Means, or Help, as Occasion served. When a Rule measures any Thing in Consistence with its own Entireness, it is then only an *entire* Rule: Otherwise used, it is no more than a Rule in *Part*. So that

that whatever is said of the Necessity of any particular Duty, or Doctrine, must ever stand together, and be measured with, what is said of every other Doctrine or Duty, as long as we profess to measure one, and t'other, by the same Rule.

HENCE it is plain, that FUNDAMENTALS, or the *Things that edify*, in the Knowledge of our Duty, Faith, Love, Union, are one and the same; and to ask for a Catalogue of the former, is the same, as to desire a List of the latter. The Christian Notion of *Edification* being that of Repairing, by pulling down what was wrong, in order to the *building up* what is regular, entire, and becoming the *Habitation of God through the Spirit*, as we all ought to be in our publick, and private Capacity, *Eph. ii. 22.* God was deserting his old Habitation the Temple of *Jerusalem*, and therefore would build another in the Hearts of his People. As many Defects as there are in the Duty of private Persons, or in the good Order, and Decency of religious Societies for the publick Worship of God, and the ministerial Parts of Religion; which are indispensibly subservient to the Furtherance of Religion, as we are sociable Creatures: The contrary Remedies are just so many edifying Things, or so many Fundamentals, either to those private Persons, or to those Societies.

SOME Things therefore are more fundamental than other some; and to some Persons, and Societies, more than others; and at one Time, and Place, more than another; just in Proportion as Defects and Disorders call for them; and the

Knowledge of the Remedy becomes applicable according to the Measure of the Revelation of it, at different Times, and Places. Thus the first Fundamental supposed, viz. the *Being of a God*, which being the prime Ground of all Religion, all are agreed in it in Pretence, or Reality, who have any Religion in Pretence or Reality: The Second is like unto it, viz. Belief in *Christ*, the Mediator in Behalf of every Man that sinneth, and standeth in Need of Repentance and Prayer, i. e. all Men. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me, This is Life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, who was sent by him*; and upon the Rock of that Confession that *Christ was the Son of the living God*; (*Peter's* Person was not, could not be a Rock, though his new Name alluded to it) he would build his Church; and the *Gates of Hell*, Death and the Grave, should not be able to hinder it from a Resurrection and eternal Life.

FAITH in him is the Head of all the Religion of the Means, of *Repentance*, *Prayer*, which are absolutely necessary; of *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*, which are generally necessary or exceeding useful; for operating the Religion of the End, the keeping the Commandments in that Uprightness, which frail peccant Mortals are capable of. Therefore called *the Foundation of God standing sure*; he that nameth the Name of *Christ*, i. e. on whom his Name is called by being baptized into his Name for Assurance of Remission of Sins; which invigorates Repentance; or he that either names or invokes him, as *Mediator* in Prayer, should depart from all Iniquity.

As

† *Matth.* xvi. 18. * *2 Tim.* ii. 19.

As then the End of Christian Faith is the Salvation of our Souls, and that Salvation is the Remission of Sins through *Christ*, the Mediator, as has been shewn; the other *subordinate* Fundamentals of this common Salvation are therefore fundamental, and to be estimated more or less so, by this *Criterion*, as they support and influence this Belief. The *New Testament* accordingly declares what Particulars are most subservient, by Way of Fundamental to the other, by expressly affixing eternal Life, or Salvation to them also; as his being the *Son of God*¹, at the same Time he is Son of Man, being *sent* from the Father; his *dying for Sin*, his *Resurrection*² to the Right Hand of God: All which directly and immediately qualify him the fittest, most adequate, and most potent Mediator between God and Man. The two former declared fundamental by our Saviour; the two latter by St. Paul *ἐν πρώτοις*. All these being constitutive of the Notion of such a Mediator, are therefore set forth in Holy Scripture in all Plainness, and therefore must be believed by all, who would have the best Benefit from their Faith in *Christ*. Other Truths or Doctrines are more or less important as they approach to, or recede from these chief Points concerning the Author and Finisher of our Faith. St. Paul, *Heb.* vi. 1, 2, sums up the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, or the *Foundations* that are not to be *renewing*, but to proceed on to Perfection, in *Repentance from dead Works*, *Faith towards God*, *Baptisms*, *laying on of Hands*, *Resurrection from the Dead*, and *eternal Judgment*.

C H A P.

¹ *Job.* iii. 18. *Job.* xvii. 3. ² *1 Cor.* xv. 3, 4. *Heb.* vi. 1, 2.



C H A P. III.

Of PRAYER, *the other Means of natural Religion.*

PRAYER is the last Instance of the Religion of the *Means* to be shewn, how it operates on the other Parts of Religion, and how Faith in the Mediator Christ operates upon that, before I draw the general Conclusion touching the Necessity of that Faith, where it is promulg'd. That Prayer in all its extent, as distinct from Thanksgiving, containing *αἰτιολογία*, Supplication for the Good that is wanted; *ῥησις*, Deprecation of Evil felt or feared; *ἐντυχίς*, Intercession in behalf of others) is the Religion of the Means, is very evident: Because, had Man continued in the State of Innocence, and pursued the original Ends of his Being for which he was made, there had been no Want of any Good, nor the Sense of any Evil felt, nor the Apprehension of any feared; having done nothing to forfeit it, he was sure of the Continuance of every Thing, to make him perfectly happy. No Occasion therefore for Supplication, Deprecation, or Intercession; no praying for Forgiveness of our Trespases against God, nor any Opportunity of forgiving Trespases against himself, when neither of them were in Being: Nor yet for Governors

vernors and those in Authority, supposing the Increase of Mankind in that State; because the Necessity of Government arose out of the sinful disorderly State of human Nature, called by *Plato ἀραξία*; Government and Laws were made for the *Unrighteous, Disobedient, and Lawless*.

IN the due and daily Practice of Love, Honour, and Esteem, of the most adorable Perfections of the most excellent Being; in Imitation of his Goodness and Benevolence; in Admiration of the Grandeur and Divine Architecture of his Works; and in the frequent Devotion of Praise and Thanksgiving, not only in their Lips, but their Lives, for their Creation, and all the Blessings of this Life, so fully enjoyed without any Interruption, or Allay; Men in that State of Innocence and Happiness had fully acquitted themselves (as do the Angels, who keep their first State) of their Relation, and Obligation of paying religious Worship and Adoration to their Maker: Nor had any other Object of Worship been known, to whom such Acknowledgments were due, but Him only. But since Man through Sin is confessedly fallen into a State of Disorder and Need, both in Body and Mind, he is consequently fallen under the *Necessity* of Prayer; which is an Act of the Mind, addressing its Desires and Breathings after Help, to some Being able and willing to supply all Wants and Blessings, and relieve and avert all Evils and Miseries. And whom can the Mind of Man ever suppose so ready to hear, and so able to answer, as the great Creator of itself and all other Creatures?

BUT

BUT being unhappily conscious, as every Man is during his present Life, of having incurr'd his Displeasure by transgressing his Laws; as *Guilt* naturally raises a *Suspicion* of the Loss of Favour, so the Mind does not *naturally* and genuinely believe him so *willing* to redress Grievances, and grant Petitions, in the Supplicant's *own* Name, and for his own Sake, without the Interposition of *some* to intercede and mediate for the obnoxious Transgressor. Thus Prayer for Wants, and Thanksgivings for what Sinners have receiv'd beyond their Deserts, is a Duty of natural Religion, arising out of the *alter'd* State of Man, as he is a Sinner, conscious of transgressing the Laws of his Maker. That Part of Worship, consisting of Prayer, seems to have had its first Beginning and Use. And that original Part consisting of Praise and Thanksgiving became *doubled* in its Obligation and Returns to the gracious Provider for our well-being, both from the Sense of having receiv'd, and from the Sense of having not deserved, but forfeited by Guilt, the good Things promotive of it; which so much the more enhances the Riches of Divine Goodness, in still affording a great Plenty of them for the Life that now is, and for that which is to come, the Means of Grace and Hopes of Glory, explicitly discovered to Christians, upon a new Tryal of Obedience.

It is certainly fit and reasonable in our lapsed State, that we, who know we receive all from God, should acknowledge that we do so, by *asking* of him, as well as by Thanks and Praise. But, in the preceding State, the latter seems to have

have been sufficient Homage for acknowledging our Dependance upon the Author of our Being. Had he continued therein, he had been as the *Angels*, who are represented in Scripture always *praising* (no where praying to) God. If the Preservation of their Being, or of the Blessings annexed by his Favour who gave them Being, was condition'd upon their Behaviour, the keeping up to that Behaviour may be said to give a *Right* to the Preservation of their Being, and of the Blessings originally appendant to it ; therefore not so properly Matter of Prayer to God ; who, though he has it in his Power, would never have it in his Will, to make an Alteration for the worse, in the Circumstances he had placed them in. Frequent Thanksgiving therefore, was enough to put them in mind of their continual Benefactor, and Dependance on him ; and the keeping that continually in mind, afforded the strong Reason and deep Impression of Gratitude, not to offend against him.

AND whereas both confessed and felt is the State of our Case, that there is an universal Failure in Man, in respect of performing his entire Duty, as the Light of Nature requires from him ; that Consciousness of transgressing, impairs his Confidence and Affiance in God, and disheartens and distances Applications of Prayer to him, according to that natural Sentiment of the blind Man, *we know that God heareth not Sinners*. Sin and Guilt naturally beget a Strangeness between the Offender and the Offended, intermits wonted Communion, daunts and intimidates the Thoughts of former familiar Acceptance. And because in the Nature of Things the Conscience
of

of Guilt makes fearful, fills with Suspicion, eclipses the Sense of Favour, and discountenances the usual Approaches unto God, without *some* to help, *some one* qualified to intervene; there had been an End of Communication between God and Man. Man had gone on continually in Rebellion and Wickedness, and all hope of Recovery to his Duty, and to the Favour of his Maker had been desperate for ever. It therefore pleased the Almighty, upon the first Entrance of Sin into the World, to appoint a *Mediator*, and lay help upon *one mighty to save*, to reconcile the Enmity, lessen the Distance, and chearfully and compleatly restore former Access and Acceptance, and be the perpetual only *Center* of Communion between God and Man; of all the Blessings and Favours descending from the former, of all the Application of Prayer or Praise from the latter. That all Doubt and Diffidence might be removed out of the Worshippers Thoughts, in coming to the Throne of Grace; and yet, at the same time, all Honour and Awfulness preserved for the Forgiver of Sin, and Preserver of Men.

THIS Door of Salvation was open'd in that Promise from the Beginning (the first Principle of all reveal'd Religion) *The Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head*; ' Which being
 ' farther explain'd by after-*Revelation*, the whole
 ' *Religion* of God's People after that, was to offer
 ' up their Worship unto him through Hope in
 ' this *Mediator*; and all the *Idolatry*, *Polytheism*,
 ' and other *false Worship*s, which after arose in
 ' the *Heathen World*, were all by such corrupt
 ' Deviations therefrom, as the Superstitions of
 ' Men, the unfaithful Way of transmitting Di-
 ' vine

‘*vine Revelations* by *Tradition* only, and the Decay of all Divine Knowledge occasion’d thereby, in Process of Time introduced among them.’

THE Worship of God, that Branch of the Religion of the End, for which Man was made, (consisting in Man’s applying himself immediately, and in his own Name, to the Author of his Being, with his Homage of Praise and Thanksgiving for Benefits receiv’d, in the ample Provision for well-being, significative of the most worthy Sentiments of his Heavenly Benefactor) receiv’d an Alteration, as soon as Man alter’d his State from Innocence to that of a *Sinner*, viz. that thenceforward even his Thanks and Praises were to be offered up, and should only find Access and Acceptance through that *Mediator* of God’s own appointing; who was to be *all in all*, in all the Means of recovering Man to perform the Religion of the End: Constituted therefore the *Head* of all *Communication* of that Worship of *Prayer*, which arose out of his State of Sin and Want; as that *Means*, or Religion of the Means, which is requisite to effect, and conducive to perfect the Religion of the End, in him.

WHO then so able, or proper to teach us *what* to pray for, and *how*, and in a manner the freest of Idolatry, Superstition, and every Defect, as our *Lord Jesus Christ*, who gives Efficacy to our Petitions, and is the Procurer of all Redress? Who so capable to relieve the Ignorance.

* Dr. Prideaux’s Letter to the *Deists*, p. 145, &c. where the Proof follows at the End of his Life of *Mahomet*, 3d Edition.

rance of Man's Supplications, or so fit to particularize and explicate that best and most ancient Form of Heathen Prayer, which *Socrates* collected out of *Homer*, 'Great God, give us the good Things that are necessary for us, whether we ask them or not; and keep evil Things from us, even when we ask them of thee?' The same *Socrates* says in *Plato's 2. Alcibiad.* or Prayer 'Tis altogether necessary you should wait for some Person to teach you how you ought to behave yourself both towards the Gods and Men.'

FOR the most part, the *Gentiles* wholly mistook the Things they ought to pray for, Things pertaining to this World only, being, in fact, their supreme, their sole Petition and Thanksgiving¹: Whereas our Lord in his most perfect Form, has inserted but one Petition for temporary Things. They believ'd they should be heard for their much speaking, using so many vain Repetitions, as if to storm and stun their Gods into a Compliance. The requisite Qualifications, Humility, Fervency, joined with Faith and Trust, which implies *Resignation* as to temporal, and Assurance of being heard with respect to spiritual Things: Purity, Charity, were unknown to them; through whom, i. e. in whose Name, in whom, i. e. the Holy Ghost², and in what

¹ Num quis quod bonus vir esset gratias diis egit unquam? At quod dives, quod honoratus, quod incolumis, joveiq; optimum maximum ob eas res appellant, non quod nos justes, temperatos, sapientes efficiat, sed quod salvos, incolumes, opulentos, copiosos. Judicium hoc omnium mortalium, fortunam a deo petendam, a seipso sumendam esse sapientiam. Cotta in Cic. de Nat. Deorum.

² Whatever else praying in the Holy Ghost, *Jud. 20.* in the Spirit, *Eph. vi. 18.* means, it seems very evidently to import these

what most approachable Ideas, and Style of Address, *i. e.* that of *our Father* (by Adoption) was even unknown to *Jews* as well as *Heathens*; but were all made manifest in the *Christian Religion*. The Worship of Prayer was instituted in Christ's
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these two Things: 1. In the Spirit of ADOPTION, whereby we cry *Abba Father*; *Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 5, 6. shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, Rom. v. 5.* which Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly through *Jesus Christ, Tit. iii. 6.* The First-fruits, or Earnest of the Spirit which we have received, *Rom. viii. 23.* and whereby we are so often said to be sealed, (another Expression for adopted) is the Resurrection of Christ, comparing *Rom. viii. 11.* and *1 Cor. xv. 20, 23.* the Spirit of Adoption, called the Spirit of Promise, *Eph. i. 13.* consisting then in the Promise of Remission of Sins, of an Inheritance, and of the Redemption of the Body, or its Resurrection, *Rom. viii. 23.* in the same Sense that the Spirit of Adoption (which we have received) beareth Witness with our Spirit that we are the Children of God; *ver. 16.* in the same *ver. 26.* it maketh Intercession for us, not with God, but ourselves, as is the Province of the Spirit to advocate, and it does so with Groanings *ἀλαλητοῖς* unuttered. In the same Sense as we, who have received the first Fruits of the Spirit, and are in earnest Expectation to be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, groan within ourselves, *ver. 23.* And in the same respect we know not what to pray for as we ought [who have not received the Spirit of Adoption] in the same, the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities and Ignorances, making us to know what Things we ought to pray for, who have received the Spirit of Adoption, *ver. 26.* 2. Praying in the Holy Ghost, or in the Spirit, imports according to the Will of God, *ver. 27.* the Spirit interceeds for us according to the Will of God, *ver. 2.* The Gospel which contains the Will of God, is called the Law of the Spirit, of Life, in Christ Jesus. *1 John v. 14.* This is the Confidence that we have in him, Christ our Advocate with the Father, that if we ask any Thing, according to his Will, he heareth us. *Eph. i. 18.* Through him [Christ] we both (*Jew and Gentile*) have Access by one Spirit [of Adoption] unto the Father. And the Jewish Temple being forsaken, and the Partition Wall broken down, to be both together a new Temple, an Habitation of God through the Spirit.

Name, the *sole Mediator*, the sure Center of Communication between God and Man, and the actual Head of all the Means of Man's Recovery, on Purpose for promoting in us both the Religion of the End, and of the Means: For to both it is excellently serviceable, and most incomparably conducive.

1. WITH respect to Duty to GOD, Prayer whether publick or private, mental or vocal, exercises us daily in the Belief of his Presence with, and Providence over us, and our Affairs; in the Honour and Veneration due from Body and Soul to the Divine Majesty; in the Sense of our Obligations to, and Dependance upon his Goodness and Long-suffering; for our Preservation, and for the Supply of all our Needs. Tho' God could give unask'd, knowing our Wants better than we ourselves; yet he will give only in such a manner, as to remind us who we are, *i. e.* *Sinners*, to whom nothing is owing by way of *Debt*, or any Obligation as to Favour. And therefore as he is in *Debt* to us for nothing, but where he pleases to make a Promise upon Conditions on our Part, he expects and directs Application to his Mercy, by way of begging and *asking* in the Name only of *Him*, through whom alone he has given us Access. And that actuates our Fear, Hope, Trust, Love of him, in Consideration of his Knowledge, Power, Justice, Goodness, and Loving-kindness in those Sentiments and Purposes of Heart, with a Care and Concern of pleasing him; and with those consenting *Cords* that draw a Man unto God.

2. As to our NEIGHBOUR; it is required to be so daily qualified in the Controul of *Wrath*, and all Uncharitableness, that those Exceedings and Transports of the *irascible* Passions are no Day (not the shortest in the Year) to have a longer Period than the setting of the Sun. And what fitter Monitor for banishing daily out of the World all those malevolent, outrageous Purposes, which are the Authors and Abettors of most of the Injuries done to our Neighbour? Or what better daily insinuate and infill the *benevolent* Affections, to the doing him all Good, than that indispensable daily Concomitant, *Charity*; which obliges us to forgive all that trespass against us, and interceed for their Good, as well as our own?

3. As to OURSELVES; daily Prayer is a daily *memento* of that *Purity*, *Humility*, and *Resignation* to the Divine Will, which ought to qualify the Supplicant, who hopes to speed in his Suit. And as to the *Means*, *Repentance*, nothing can be devised a greater Perfecter of the same, than Confession of Sin, which daily accompanies Prayer. ‘ What better Step towards making Reparation for our Fault, as we are capable of, towards God? For as by Sin we have dishonour’d God, disown’d his Authority, and cast the utmost Contempt upon his Laws, so by confessing our Sins we take Shame to ourselves, and give Glory to God, we accuse and condemn ourselves of Iniquity and Folly, and justify the Wisdom of God; we acknowledge that he has done righteously, but we have done wickedly; we own that his Commands were

‘ holy, just, and good, and that we ourselves
 ‘ were guilty of the highest Impiety, Injustice,
 ‘ and Ingratitude, in transgressing them. By
 ‘ this Means, we do in some measure recall what
 ‘ is past, and virtually revoke what we have
 ‘ done: This is an Act of Submission to God’s
 ‘ Authority over us, and expresses our Desire of
 ‘ returning again to our Duty and Obedience.’
 For as that daily expresses our Sorrow for what
 we have done amiss, that supposes and fixes a
 daily Resolution on our Part of endeavouring to
 amend for the future.

It is hardly possible in the Nature of such a
 Self-Accusation and Arraignment of our volun-
 tary Transgressions, for any using it with Seri-
 ousness and Recollection, not to be affected with
 Concern and Uneasiness, for having offended so
 good and gracious a Benefactor, and grow more
 and more determin’d not to relapse into such Pro-
 vocations and Follies; but never to imagine
 themselves at liberty to go on upon a new Score
 of sinning, as the manner of some is. If we use
 daily Confession as we ought, instead of adding,
 it must necessarily lessen the Number of our Sins.
 For how can we reconcile it to our own Thoughts,
 if we think at all, to venture deliberately upon
 that Commission of Sin, or Omission of Duty,
 which almost as soon as done or omitted, must
 be confessed and repented of? This is so very
 absurd, that a rational Agent cannot continue in
 his Sins, if he duly and truly continues in his
 Prayers. For if we persevere in this Day by
 Day, it must daily have an Influence on us to our
 Amendment, for perfecting Repentance, and
 advancing in Holiness. Because, none can long
 bear

bear the tacit Reproach of coming daily into the Presence of God, to confess the same Offences over again, which they daily repeat, and take no Care to avoid. The very Shame of Mind, added to the Pain and Irksomeness of the Reflection, must needs make them at length, either quit their Sins, or their Prayers. But, if they are daily constant in the latter, the repeated Discipline of Reproach and Admonition, arising out of the Confession of Sin, not forgetting the Aggravations, nor favouring with Excuses. That there must be no Choice, no willing Regard to Iniquity in our Heart, as ever we expect God to regard our Prayers; must in time be effectual to make them forsake it, and make them less severe, and more candid to the Faults of others; which is the Perfection of Repentance.

THUS daily Prayer is fitted, and therefore prescribed continually, and without ceasing, (which implies no more than being constant twice a Day, according to the Analogy of the *continual* and *unceasing* Sacrifice at the Temple, though but twice regularly every Day) and so much pressed and required for exercising the Mind in those Habits and Dispositions, as shall regularly flow and shed their Influence into the several Acts of performing the Whole Duty of Man, as Occasion offers; as is well summed up in a Prayer of that *Book*; with respect to God, 'For improving in
' the Knowledge of him, and in Works suitable
' to that Knowledge, in a true Faith, purifying
' Hope, unfeigned Love, full Trust in him,
' Zeal for him, Reverence of all Things that relate to him, Fearful to offend him, Humble
' under his Corrections, Devout in his Service,

' Sorrowful for our Sins. With respect to *our-*
 ' *selves*, it impresses Meekness, Humility, Con-
 ' tentedness, Diligence in all Duties, Watchful-
 ' ness against all Temptations, perfect Purity
 ' and Temperance, and such Moderation in all
 ' lawful Enjoyments, as never to become a Snare
 ' unto us. With regard to our *Neighbour*, that
 ' we do as we would be done by, yielding to all
 ' whatever by any Kind of Right becomes their
 ' Due, that we put on such Bowels of Mercy
 ' and Compassion, as never to fail doing all Acts of
 ' Charity to all Men, whether Friends or Ene-
 ' mies according to the Divine Examples set us'.

Now the constant Exercise of Prayer pre-
 serves, strengthens, and perfects the Will in its
 true Liberty and Choice of loving the Divine
 Perfections, and Heavenly Things, by the na-
 tural Efficacy of Discipline and godly Custom ;
 its Influence over the rest of the Subject Powers,
 is thereby gained more and more ; and re-
 peated Acts of this Godliness augments the Power
 of resisting Temptations, deadens the Love of
 the World, and quickens and improves our
 Faith, Affections, and Affiance in another ; and
 at the same Time brings in all the Joy and En-
 joyment receivable from worldly Things, subor-
 dinated to that Expectation : And therefore it is
 said, that Godliness [*Exercise in this* Godliness,
 in Opposition to *bodily* Exercise for bodily Emo-
 luments only, which profiteth little or nothing,
 nothing to be sure comparatively speaking] is
 profitable for all Things, having the Promise of this
 Life, &c. [for it gives Chearfulness to the Spirits,
 and Marrow to the Bones, which *cæteris paribus*
 secures the Enjoyment, long Enjoyment of this
 Life,

Life, had there been no Commandment with *Promise of that Sort.*] Besides, it daily impresses, and recollects a Sense of the Being, and Presence of God, our continual Dependance upon, and Obligations to him. Now all these are necessary for imprinting, and for preserving the Sense and Sincerity, and for keeping up the Power of Religion, which is the Spirit of Power and a sound Mind in us; as necessary to the good-liking and well-being of our Souls, as daily Bread and Breathing is to that of our Bodies.

AND because the Exercise and Discipline of that Duty is so efficacious for increasing our Virtues, and lessening our Transgressions, and Omissions; that gives us, at once, the true Reasons of *Fervency* therein, and of the many Commandments for its *Frequency*, attended always with that Fervency. For the greater the Earnestness of Heart and Desire exerted towards the Things prayed for, in Opposition to Coldness and Indifference; and the oftener it accompanies our Devotion, the more powerfully it produces those good Effects in us, which God, in Christ the Mediator, intended from it; *viz.* to keep us in a State of continual Dependance upon him, through that Mediator, in a thorough Sense of our Weakness and Wants, and of his Mercy, his Fulness, and his Promises to supply all through him.

THUS he grants to Importunity, in his Son's Name, and encourages it, not because it moves, or makes a Change in him; but as it repeatedly contributes to work in us, changeable Creatures, an Alteration for the better, and a more steady cleaving to our Calling in that Name that we call

upon, and is called upon us. It is most apparent that the End and Appointment of Prayer was wholly and solely for our Benefit; forasmuch as the Majesty of Heaven, to whom we address, is incapable of any Addition from any of his Creatures; when we have done our best in that, and every other Respect, we are still but *unprofitable Servants*: And therefore there can be no other Inducement in God, to approve and require that incumbent Duty arising out of the State of our Wants, after Sin entered into the World; but because it turns to our Advantage altogether, and is an improving Exercise of our Faculties, for meliorating them, and advancing us in Goodness, to render us more and more suitable Objects of his increasing Favour, and Loving-Kindness. And when we are careful to answer that End of Prayer, by growing better in the Use of it, and proceeding to the Perfection, our Nature in its present Imbecility is capable of, in performing the Religion of the End; we certainly arrive at that Perfection, Happiness, and End, which God proposed from our Compliance with *that* Means of his own appointing.

AND as that Way of coming to God only through the *one* Mediator *Jesus Christ, in Spirit and in Truth*, in the *Spirit* of Adoption, and the *true* Mediator, is the only true Worship of God, ever since the Fall: Whatever differs from it, must be accounted either ignorant, false, or perverse Worship; as worshipping *without* a Mediator, the Case of *Jews; Mahometans; and Deists* in a Christian Country. Or idolatrous, or in an idolatrous Manner, when by *any other* than the *one* Lord and only true Mediator; whether *thro'*

one, or many Lords Mediators, to *one* supreme God, much diversify'd; as some of the Pagans applied to one Supreme under one Name, some under another; some to one Mediator, some to another, (though at the first Introduction of Idolatry, the Idols or Images were erected not to the supreme God, but to their several *Mediators* only :) Or by any other *in Conjunction* with the true Mediator; or the worshipping the Mediator in the tiny *Image* of a *Wafer*, as in *Popish* Countries.

THUS

Vid. Prideaux's Letter to the Deists, pag. 146. &c. Id. Connell. pag. 177. The Passage from this last Book of that learned Author is worthy to be laid before the Reader. 'The true Religion which *Noah* taught his Posterity, was that which *Abraham* practis'd; the worshipping of one God, the supreme Governor, and Creator of all Things, with Hopes in his Mercy through a *Mediator*. For the Necessity of a Mediator between God and Man, was a general Notion, which obtained among all Mankind from the Beginning. For being conscious of their own Meanness, Vileness and Impurity, they could not conceive how it was possible for them, of themselves alone, to have any Access to the all-holy, all-glorious, and supreme Governor of all Things. They considered him as too high and too pure; and themselves too low, and polluted, for such a Converse: And therefore concluded there must be a Mediator, by whose Means only they could make any Address unto him, and by whose Intercession alone, any of their Petitions could be accepted of. But no clear Revelation being then made of the Mediator whom God had appointed, because, as yet, he had not been manifested to the World, they took upon them to address unto him by Mediators of their own chusing. And their Notion of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, being, that they were the Tabernacles, or Habitations of Intelligences, which animated those Orbs in the same manner, as the Soul of Man animates his Body, and were the Causes of all their Motions, and that these Intelligences were of a middle Nature between God and them; they thought these the properest Beings to become Mediators between God and them. And therefore the Planets being the nearest to them of all these

THUS as Prayer actuates the Religion of the End, and promotes Repentance; so Faith in *Christ* the only *sufficient* Mediator, as built upon the Foundation of his being Son of *God*, and Son of *Man*, animates Man's Access unto God, and invites his Application to the Throne of Grace, with an Assurance of being well received for his Name Sake. Whatever is the Want or Subject of Petition, the NAME of *Christ* interposing is the recommending Argument, why it is granted; or accepted, and his Intercession is all in all for

these heavenly Bodies, and generally looked on to have the greatest Influence on this World, they made Choice of them in the first Place, for their Gods-Mediators, who were to mediate for them with the supreme God, and procure from him the Mercies and Favours, which they prayed for, and accordingly they directed Divine Worship unto them as such. And here began all the *Idolatry*, that hath been practised in the World. They first worshipped them *per Sacella*, that is, by their *Tabernacles*, and afterwards by Images also. By the first, they meant the Orbs themselves. — And therefore when they paid their Devotions to any one of them, they directed their Worship towards the Planet, in which they supposed the Intelligence dwelt. But the Orbs, by their Rising and Setting, being as much under the Horizon, as above, they were at a Loss how to address to them in their Absence: To remove this, they had Recourse to the Invention of *Images*, in which, after their Consecration, they thought these Intelligences, or inferior Deities, to be as much present by their Influence, as in the Planets themselves; and that all Addresses to them were made as effectually before the one, as before the other. And this was the Beginning of Image Worship among them. — Hence we find *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Mars*, *Apollo*, *Mercury*, *Venus*, and *Diana*, to be first ranked in the Polytheism of the Ancients: For they were their first Gods. After this, a Notion obtaining that good Men departed, had a Power with God also to mediate and intercede for them, they deify'd many of those, whom they thought to be such, and hence the Number

for gaining the Blessing. Thus the Prophet, *Hof. xiv. 2.* foretold, *Take with you WORDS, and turn to the Lord, say unto him, take away all Iniquity and receive us graciously; so will we render the Calves of our Lips.* Ever since he has graciously vouchsafed to lend his Disciples his prevailing Name, Prayer becomes a Key for opening the Kingdom of Heaven, and is one [†] of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven given to them; as Remission of Sins, enlivening Repentance is the other Key. And as neither of those Keys could do any Thing in opening the Kingdom of Heaven without *Christ*, to whomsoever he was pleased first to give the Knowledge of himself, in the Revelation of himself to the World, they first confessing him to be *Christ*, (the Foundation of his Church)

ber of Gods increased in the idolatrous Time of the World. This Religion first began among the *Chaldeans*, which their Knowledge in Astronomy helped to lead them to. And from this it was, that *Abraham* separated himself, when he came out of *Chaldea*: From the *Chaldeans* it spread itself over all the *East*, where the Professors of it had the Name of *Sabians*. From them it passed into *Egypt*, and from thence to the *Grecians*, who propagated it to all the Western Nations of the World. — These *Sabians*, in consecrating their Images, used many Incantations to draw down into them, from the Stars, those Intelligences, for whom they erected them, whose Power and Influence, they held, did afterward dwell in them. And from hence the whole foolery of *Telestins*, which some make so much ado about, had its Original. — The other Sect of Idolaters, in the Eastern Countries, were the *Magians*; they abominating all Images, worshipped God only by Fire, *See. 8vo. Edit.* The same true Notion of *Idolatry* is firmly established in *King's Critical History of the Creed, pag. 58. &c.* And that the original Constitution, Nature, mediatorial Office, and Worship of *Demons*, sprung from the primæval Tradition of the *Messiah*. See *Theoph. Gale, de ordu & progressu Philosophiæ, pag. 682.*

[†] Compare *Matth. xvi. 19.* with *Ch. xviii. 19, 20.*

Church) *first* receiv'd those Keys for their own Use, and to convey them to others for the equal Use of all that believed in him afterwards, thro' their Preaching and Writing; this would have follow'd of itself had our Lord made no such Declaration to his Apostles, nor used any Allusion to *Peter's* Name, a *Rock*.

How God would be worshiped and ador'd in a State of Innocence, was plain enough to human Reason; *viz.* by praising his Excellencies, and punctually keeping his Commandments. But when complicated Transgression enter'd upon the Lives of Men, and recoil'd back its Guilt upon their Reason, for having so often and grievously offended; their Worship was in a manner quite distanc'd and dissolv'd. Shame, Fear of Displeasure, Distrust of Acceptance, and anxious Thoughts, as to future Favour, are as natural to, and in a manner inseparable from, a *guilty* Mind in Presence of the heavenly Majesty, conscious of all its Misdeeds; as *Blushing* is to the Body, at the first Approach to an offended Superior here upon Earth. And what is Shame before God, but a conscious Sense of our many foolish and foul Practices in his Presence? As Pain is the greatest Dread of human Nature, so Fear that is relative to it, is the strongest Passion: And if Punishment is but suspected to be the Consequence of Guilt (and Reason must be stupified if it does not firmly believe it where there is Law, and a Governor conscious of the Breach of it) all the natural, or moral Excellencies, or all the obliging Benefits of that Governor will never be considered, or have any Effect, till the other Apprehension is first removed. This Uneasiness

easiness naturally begets an Inclination to Distance, and that Inclination produces a Neglect in coming, and that inures into a Habit, and that Habit would have compleatly thrown off all Worship to the Creator; and God must either have changed the Nature of Man, or relinquish'd the Homage of his Worship for the future, if he had not been pleas'd to step in to cheer the Heart, and raise up the Head of his desponding Votary.

THUS at the very first Transgression, the sneaking inherent *Shame* that springs from conscious Guilt, threw the first Pair into some *desired* Distance from God, that they might shun the Company of their Maker, which they were so lately fond of, as well as shew'd an immediate Impairment of their Reason; from their inconsistent seeking a hiding place from his *all-present* Majesty; and such a Dissatisfaction and Uneasiness in themselves also, that they did not care to look upon themselves or one another, as *they were* naked of the Innocence they were in before. And they certainly had never sought after God more, if he had not first graciously called to, and argued the Matter with them, denounc'd their Punishment in this World, and immediately acquainted them with the future Remedy provided for them, and all their Progeny.

THE Almighty therefore, to shew the Power of his Mercy unto Salvation, caused the Dawn of the *Hope* of all the World to arise, and dissipated the dark, dismal Cloud, with the Light of a *Promise* of one mighty to save, from the Seed of the Woman; who should be a Mediator
and

and Intercessor for Peace, and Pardon, in their best Endeavours of serving God; as secure and suitable to God's Interest, as he was secure and suitable to the Interest of Man. And because God's Promises are the same Thing as Performance, should then take place, to have its comfortable Effects: And as a Testimony and Pledge thereof, *He instituted* Sacrifices to himself, the Morning Star of future Revelation, and of more explicit Christianity in the Fulness of Time; that as sure and as often as Man offered up one, he might assuredly depend upon the other. Thus the general World fell into Sacrifice, as an Act of Religion, till the *Death* of Christ upon the Cross, which is the *ultimatum* of all Sacrifices.

THAT all Kindreds, and People of the Earth from the Beginning of the World, and the Generality still to this Day, have applied, and do apply themselves to *bloody* Sacrifices, and relied upon them as the general Symbol or *Medium* of the Worship of the Deity; antient and modern History, and Travels abundantly inform us. Nor is there any Way of accounting how the whole World, with one Consent, in so many distant Oceans, came to fall into Agreement about such a strange Part, and seemingly *inhuman* Persuasion of Religion, as if *without shedding of Blood there was no Remission*; unless, in Fact, they received it, as they did their Blood, by Conveyance down from the Progenitor of our Race; who practised it by express Direction from Heaven, after the *aforesaid* Promise made. *Eusebius* very judiciously resolves, that this Way of Worship was not taken up by Chance, or by human Motion, *but suggested to them by a Divine*

Initi-

*Intimation, Demonst. Evang. L. I. c. 10. Καὶ
 δέλας ὁ ἐπὶ νομίαν ἐπαγγελισμὸν.* Which Promise
 preserv'd under such Pre-figuration was to be
 fulfill'd in due Time, by a solemn Oblation of
 the sacred Blood of some Person, who should
 receive his Humanity only from the Woman.

FOR a Man's destroying the Life of a Beast,
 and shedding its Blood, can never naturally sig-
 nify a Man's Obedience to God; having no such
 Signification by the Dictates of the Law of Na-
 ture; it must therefore signify only *ex instituto*,
 and become a Sign of Obedience, or rather an In-
 stance of the Obedience of *Faith*, in Virtue of a
positive Law or Institution from God; which
 shews, that the offering expiatory or bloody Sa-
 crifices, could never have its original from the
 Light of Nature, but from some *positive, ad-
 ditional* Declaration of the Will of God. Thro'
 this *Faith* Abel offered a better Sacrifice than Cain.
 So far is it from being true, what some have
 lightly

¹ *Vid. Outram de Sacrif. pag. 10, 167, 244, 278.*
 Concerning the first bloody or expiatory human Sacrifice
 offered as *λύσις* among the Race of Idolaters before the
 Flood. See *Bishop Cumberland's* learned Remarks on *Sanchoni-
 atbo's Phœnician Hist. pag. 37, 137, 138, 170, 147.*
 Whence he concludes, that Dæmons were worshipp'd by such
 Sacrifices before the Flood, when Idolatry was in its young-
 est Years. In the fifth Generation of the idolatrous Line of
Cain, from *Adam*, there is mention of bloody Sacrifice of
 Beasts, *pag. 239.* When, as he probably infers, began 'the
 eating of raw and bloody Flesh, which was therefore for-
 bidden to *Noah* and his Posterity, both in the Case of Sa-
 crifice and of ordinary Diet, to prevent all Correspondence
 with their savage Practices.' That human Sacrifices were
 not learnt by the Heathen from *Abraham's* going about to
 sacrifice *Isaac*, but intended by God in the Issue of that Try-
 al, to be discouraged by it, *ib. pag. 139, &c.* To this I sub-
 join

lightly imagin'd, that Christianity occasionally conform'd its Notion of a Mediator to the general Belief of, and Application to Mediators, in the Religion of the *Gentiles*; that the *Heathen* Sacrifice, and Notion of a Mediator, had its Origin from a traditionary Usage of the one, and Belief of the Necessity of the other, from the first Infancy of the World, as has been shewn. Our Author, agreeably to his Principles, derives Sacrifices wholly from human Invention; and gives them so late, and so ridiculous a Date, *Pag.* 79. that he is not worthy of a Refutation; every one that reads the Bible can confute him.

THEY sufficiently indeed corrupted it, nay to their extreme Abuse of Reason; in multiplying

join a Passage from Dr. Sherlock, (now Bishop of Salisbury) *Use and Intent of Prophecy*, pag. 74. 3d Edit. 'We read that Cain brought an Offering of the Fruit of the Ground, and Abel of the Firstlings of his Flock, and the Fat thereof: The Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering; but unto Cain, and to his Offering he had no Respect. Allowing the Maxim of the Jewish Church to have been good from the first Institution of Sacrifice, that without Blood there is no Remission: The Case may possibly be this. Abel came a Petitioner for Grace and Pardon, and brought the *Attonement* appointed for Sin; Cain appears before God as a *just Person wanting no Repentance*; he brings an Offering in Acknowledgment of God's Goodness and Bounty, but no *Attonement* in Acknowledgment of his own Wretchedness. The Expostulation of God with Cain favours this Account; *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at thy Door*: i. e. If thou art righteous, thy Righteousness shall save thee; if thou art not, by what Expiation is thy Sin purged? It lieth still at thy Door. Add to this that the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says, that *Abel's Sacrifice* was rendered excellent by *Faith*: What could this Faith be, but a Reliance on the Promises and Appointments of God? Which Faith Cain wanted, relying on his own Well-doing.'

tipling those who were no Gods; and after they had given them a Being, serving and worshipping them so irrationally and stupidly, that the Service and Worship might be call'd that of those who were, in a manner, no Men. Instead of honouring Him, whom they professed to know as God, from the Works of Creation, they were so vain and abounding in their Imaginations of all Sorts of impious Rites, that they prophan'd him, and made a *Devil* of him. For as *Honor est in Honorante*, whether they intended to worship Devils or not, the Worship was such as *became* no other, and therefore it belong'd to them, and they claim'd it as their own.

NAY, the wise Philosophers themselves communicated in those Scenes of Absurdity and Immorality. Many of them by long Train of Thought, had more sublime and purer Notions of the Deity, and of the Worship suitable to Him; But what was the World the better for that? As long as they continued in Fact, like the rest, in the notorious Immorality and Breach of the Law of Nature, in not respecting and honouring God as He is, and as they plainly knew Him ~~to be~~; the greatest, certainly, of all Immorality, as being the Cause of most other Wickedness. So far were they from vindicating the Honour of the supreme Being, or bringing a Reformation into the World, by rooting out the first leading Principle of Vice, wrong Notions, and vicious Worship of God; that they, every where countenanced and complied with the *establis'd* Dishonour and Contumely against Him; they were strictly Partakers of so much known Iniquity, by being actually guilty of it, and

promoting the same in others by their Example. The chief of them, *Plato* and *Cicero*, encourag'd the Magistrate, and civil Powers, by recommending it in their respective Plan of Laws; and so got the Iniquity every where established by Law¹.

AND

¹ *Laſtant. de falſa Rel. L. I. cap. 15. ſpeaking of Cicero, ſays thus, de legibus, quo in opere Platonem ſecutus de religione ita ſanxit. Divos & eos, qui cœleſtes ſemper habitati ſunt, colunt.* The ſame Author, L. II. cap. 3. *de Origine Erroris, reproaches him for it in a beautiful Strain of Eloquence.* Intelligebat *Cicero* falſa eſſe, quæ homines adorarent: Nam cum multa dixiſſet, quæ ad everſionem religionum valerent: Ait tamen non eſſe illa vulgo diſputanda, ne ſuſceptas publice religione, diſputatio talis extinguat. Quid ei facies, qui, cum errare ſe ſentiat, ultro ipſe in lapides impignat, ut populus omnis offendant? Ipſe ſibi oculos eruat, ut omnes cæci ſint? Qui nec de aliis bene mereatur, quos patitur errare; nec de ſeipſo, qui alienis accedit erroribus; nec utitur tandem ſapientiæ ſuæ bono, ut factis impleat, quod mente Percepit: Sed prudens & ſciens pedem laqueo inferit, ut ſimul cum cæteris, quos liberare ut prudentior debuit, & ipſe capiatur? Quin potius, ſi quid tibi *Cicero* virtutis eſt, experire, populum facere ſapientem: Digna res eſt, ubi omnes eloquentiæ tuæ vires exeras. Non enim verendum eſt, ne te in tam bona cauſa deficiat oratio; qui ſæpe etiam malas copioſe, ac fortiter defendiſti. Sed nimirum *Socratis* carcerem times; ideoque patrocinium veritatis ſuſcipere non audeſ. At mortem, ut ſapiens, contemnere debuiſti. Et erat quidem multo pulchrius, ut ob bene potius dicta, quam ob maledicta morereris: Nec tibi laudis plus *Philippiæ* afferre potuerunt, quam diſcuſſus error humani generis, & mentis hominum ad ſanctitatem tua diſputatione revocata. Sed concedamus timiditati; quæ in ſapiente non debet. Quid ergo ipſe in eodem verſari errore; Video te terrena, & manufacta venerari; vana eſſe intelligis; & tamen eadem facit, quæ faciunt ipſi, quos ipſe ſtuliſſimos conſiteris. Quid igitur proſuit, viſiſſe ſeveritatem, quam nec deſenſurus eſſe, nec ſecuturus? *The Reader will excuſe ſo much about Cicero, if it is conſidered our Author makes him not only the Model of his Opinions, but the Pattern of his Writing, by Way of Dialogue, againſt the prevailing Abſurdities and Superſtition of his Countrymen. See his Preface.*

AND the first Advice in the best of their practical Catechisms * is, to worship the Gods in the first Place, but then it is, *according to the manner it is establish'd by Law*, i. e. of the City, or Country where you are; which, by the way, vied with one another in bringing the most Absurdity, Obscenity, and Profanation, into the Worship of their respective Gods; sometimes one God being in favour with them, and sometimes another. So great a Corruption and Infatuation does Idolatry superinduce upon human Reason, where it is receiv'd, that to this Day, the politest Part of the Heathen World, the *Chinese* and *Japonese*, are rather, according to the Account of Travellers, more guilty of the Excesses and Absurdities of it, than the grosser and more ignorant Parts; as if it was a standing Maxim, the more Fools they made their Gods, the wiser were the Worshipers.

No Wonder therefore, since all manner of Encouragement was given to the Corruption of Worship, that an universal Corruption of Manners was the Consequence of it. If the Fountain is impure and polluted, the Streams must be so of Course. It was a cunning devised Apology, to impute the Weakness and Vices of human Nature to the adorable Gods, the better to justify themselves in them; but whoever believ'd them to be such in reallity, could hardly arrive at being better themselves. If Lewdness was the common Ceremony of Worship, it must be an Ornament, instead of Disgrace to their Lives

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and

* *Adoratus est æquum dicit, solum uti dicitur, Timæ. Pythag.*

and Conversations, and shew forth more of God and his Religion, than any Thing to the contrary.

IN short, all the Worshipers might acquit, or rather applaud themselves in their Irregularities, from the same Patronage of *Jupiter*, the Fellow makes use of in *Terence*¹; so natural, and withal, sacred is the Argument to all, who believe *Imitation* of the Deity to be a principal Part of Religion and Homage: If the *Thunderer* does so and so, why am not I, a little Fellow and his humble Votary, authoriz'd to do as he does? If the supreme *Jupiter*, who is, or ought to be, an Example to Gods and Men, shews his Almighty in rakish Frolicks and Debaucheries, why should not my Weakness be excused? Why should I pretend to be better than my Principles? Or think of exceeding the Principal of all the Gods and Goddeses in Modesty or Morality? No, but I will love and obey him in those Things, as far as I am able, with all my Heart, with all my Soul, with all my Strength. If the Religion of the Means, Prayer and Worship, which should be the Cure, together with Repentance, for recovering Men to the Religion of the End, is become the Disease, how languishing and deplorable must have been the Condition of Mankind? How could it be otherwise, but that the whole World must have lain in Wickedness at the coming of our Saviour?

WHO therefore came at the fittest Juncture of universal Peace in the World, (the *Roman Empire*

¹ *Quod fecit is qui Tempia Caeli summa sonitu concutit, Ego Homuncio hoc non facerem? Ego illud vero ita feci, ac lubens.*

Empire also then having the widest Spread of Dominion over the Earth, for the Convenience of propagating his Religion far and near; and then also were Arts and Sciences, and human Reason, at their highest Improvements, the greatest Curiosity after Truth spreading itself every where, for the better proving, sifting, and examining into this new Religion) and at the greatest need, *to destroy the Works of the Devil*; who had usurp'd and reign'd, as *God*, over the Idolaters of this World; his Works of Idolatry and Superstition, to which he had enslav'd the Nations, were broken, dissipated, and disappear'd before his Religion, as Darkness when the Light approaches. That was the Glory and Excellency of Christianity, to cleanse away that Sink of Wickedness, and cast out the greatest the devoutest Hindrance of all Good, that worst Corruption of all Morals, in the first place; and then shew the more excellent Way, to repent of their Sins, and pray to, and worship God in Spirit and Truth, *the true Mediator Jesus Christ*, and teach them all other Righteousness.

THEN Sacrifices vanished, the Reason of them ceasing; and none were left acceptable to God, but the *presenting our Bodies*, in Opposition to the dead Works of Drunkenness, the Fornication and Impurities which defecrated the Body, in the Heathen Worshiper, *a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable Service*; placing the Service of the Body in the Reverse of what the Heathens thought Reason, Duty, and Devotion; and the *doing good and communicating*

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to

to the Needs of others, which is *well pleasing* to him. Then ceased very many abominable Practices against the Law of Nature; and sober, righteous, godly Lives, the End of the Gospel, flourished in great Plenty; and still flourishes, in Comparison of the Behaviour of those who were, or are Strangers to the Gospel of Christ. Therefore,

THE Spight of our Author against Christianity, is equal to his Falshood, in asserting ^a the Lives of Christians no better, but rather worse than Pagans. He might have seen in a Book ^a he ought not to be a Stranger to, as a *Civilian*, a long Catalogue of innumerable gross Corruptions of the Law of Nature current in the World, which *Christendom* is free from. His Accusation is not only contrary to Matter of Fact, but to the Reason of Things. For some may be worse than their Religion, and no Fault in their Religion neither, but in themselves, for Want of considering it, and complying with its Directions. But how are any, how can ever any be capable of being better than their Religion? How bad that was, has been shewn. If the *Principles* of a Man are depraved, his Practice must be the same, as consequently as an Effect follows a Cause. It is inconsistent moreover with a favourite Principle of our Author, 'That Christianity is neither more nor less than the Republication of the Law of Nature': If so, then the Lives of Pagans and Christians must be the same, being governed by the self-same Law; and so he equally acquits,

^a Heb. xiii. 16.

^a Pag. 366.

^b Puffend, of the Law of Nature, &c. pag. 126.

acquits, or equally accuses both. But let the Comparison be fairly erected between the Philosophers of one, and the Philosophers of the other; the middle Sort of one, with the like of the other; the lower Vulgar of one, with their Peers of the other; and the Difference will soon appear.

ALL the three Degrees of the former were equally involved in, and defiled with Idolatry, which all the other three, who conform to the Scriptures, are free of. Their Philosophers, who should have been the Reformers of the Age, being the natural Prophets and Teachers of it, not only connived at, but did what they could to promote, and against their Conscience too, all manner of Ungodliness, and recommend the grand Corruption of all, the generating Cause of all other Corruption, false, impious, and abominable Notions, and Sentiments of their Gods; tho' from the visible Effects, they *knew God* the first Cause and Author of all Things, and by the Light of Nature- knew him to be a *Spirit*, yet worship'd him not as such; but as lumps of Silver or Gold, or Stone they created him out of, they *glorify'd him not as God*; but joined in depositing and abusing him with filthy, beastly, scandalizing blasphemous Rites, by regularly conforming themselves to the publick Service and Worship: And so the *Seeing* led the Blind into the Ditch, and fell into it themselves. They were *Hereticks* with a Witness against God and his Religion, by doing what they did, *self condemned*. What they would not, that they did, and what they hated and laughed at, that did they; and not so much from the Instigation of fleshly Appetites, as out of a mean Pusillanimity and servile

Fear, which is as great an Immorality and Re-
proach, as can be imputed to a Philosopher: For
they boasted of *Fortitude*, as the Head of their
cardinal Virtues, but would not bear the asking of
a Finger for the Cause of God, and the Promo-
tion of the Religion of Nature. It is a vulgar
Error, that *Socrates* himself¹, though the best of
the Bunch, and the most extraordinary Person
that ever lived among them, died a Martyr for
the Belief of one only God, for he held many, at
least, and his last dying Order was a Sacrifice to
*Æsculapius*².

THE Happiness, or the practical Virtues of
the *Stoicks* was *bonum theatrale*, to be seen of
Men, they had no Eye to, nor Intention of
serving God in it, they equal'd their wise
Man to him, and therefore they had their Re-
ward, in this Life, such as it was, the Praise
of Men: Vain-Glory was their Heaven, and
therefore they are rightly stiled *animalia gloriae*.
All Sects and Degrees among them, pursued
Praise and Glory with all their Strength, with
all their Mind, and with all their Soul; to
the Impulse of that Principle was owing all the
worthy Atchievements in War, or Peace, all the
Labours

¹ See *Cudworth's Intel. Syst.* p. 401.

² Besides his Apologist, *Xenophon* in his *memorable Things*,
declares of him, 'That he never gave any other Answer to
' those who enquired of him in what manner they ought to
' sacrifice to the Gods, than that every one should observe the
' Customs of his Country. Thus, in all Actions of Piety,
' *Socrates* took particular Care to do nothing contrary to the
' Custom of the Republick, and advised his Friends to make
' that the Rule of their Devotion to the Gods, alledging it
' to be an Argument of Superstition and Vanity, to dissent
' from the establish'd Worship.' And *Epictetus*, *eb. xxxviii.*
gives the like Advice.

Labours of the Brain, and of the Body. That served them, instead of certain Immortality; they were pleased with it as a sovereign good. They were elevated at the Thoughts of gratifying this Vanity, and to be disappointed of it, was Death to them. It was Life, and every Thing, to reign Head of their own School, and Founders of their own Notions; and therefore inconsistent with them to be *Scholars* to Christianity, or any differing Truth, though never so certain.

AMBITION, Revenge, Self-murder, were the Gallantries of human Nature, and Meekness, Humility and Patience, its Pusillanimity and Meanness. And at their languishing Hours that Consolation may be presumed from the Confession of an Hero, to be general among them:
Te colui, virtus, ut rem; ast tu nomen inane es.

PIETY towards God, which gives Sincerity, Reality, and Being to the human Virtues, was little thought of, and much less cultivated. The most regular System, *Aristotle's Eth.* is observed to have no other Scope, but to advance the Tranquillity and Welfare of civil Life. How should they practise Humility, when they knew not what it meant? But when we read the Christian Precepts of that, and Meekness, *quem philosophum non contemnimus?* Cicero's Exception to his Advice of doing good, *nisi laceffitur injuria*¹, gave a full Scope to Revenge, and the Retaliation of any Injury; nay private Revenge was practised as *Virtue*, and had the same Respect paid to it. Uncleanliness and Fornication was as common

¹ Off. l. 3. Vid. Laë. l. vi. cap. 18. a Dissertation upon that false Virtue.

mon as Meat and Drink, and reckoned full as lawful; and the *Platonists* could see no Sin in Adultery, being taught the lawfulness of the Community of Wives: Neither could there be any Restraint from Polygamy, except, perchance, from the Laws of the State; being destitute of the Principle of Reasoning from the Nature of Things, viz. the *first* Creation of but one Woman for one Man; nor was exposing innocent Children to Death, any Cruelty with many of them; nor unnatural Lusts nor Drunkenness, nor the Immolation of human Blood at the Altars of many of their Gods, any Scruple with any of them, but rather conscientious Acts of Devotion, which occasioned that Lampoon, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.*

Now, if we compare the middle Sort of Christians with these vain-glorious Philosophers; how very much more do they know? How much better do they practice? They have the Virtue, which the other wanted, to propagate the true Knowledge of God, and his Perfections; of his Mercy, and of his Methods moreover in *Christ Jesus* for reforming, and saving the World. And having a Zeal according to their Knowledge of that excellent Way to Happiness, they travel into distant Regions, to communicate it to others.

As to the lower Sort, even they exceed the Pagan Philosophers, much more others, in many Things; the *Coblers* and *Porters* in Protestant Countries, who can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and are further instructed in the *Christian* Catechism, have a better System of Knowledge, and of Duty, than

than all the Heathen Philosophers of whatever Denomination put together. It is short and suitable to them whose Business is the Drudgery of Life; whilst the Lectures and Books of the other were tedious, complicated, fine-spun Reasonings, above the Comprehensions of their Vulgar, and therefore could never be of any Use to their Practice. The Immortality of the Soul is a fix'd Principle with our Vulgar, but the wise Men of the other, the more they reasoned, the more they confirmed themselves and others in Doubt concerning it. Their *breve iter per fidem* is more directory, and comfortable, than all the others innumerable, intricate Volumes about Happiness. They can sing to the Praise and Glory of God, whilst the other had nothing but drunken, lewd Songs to *Bacchus, Cybele, Flora, &c.* The *Plowman* has an Argument to confide in for the *Resurrection* of the *Body*, the annual burying and dying of his Corn in the Earth out of Sight, and soon after in his Sight, sprouting again to Improvement; absurd impossible Belief to Heathen Philosophers! Our Author could not but know of the many Fountains of Knowledge opened *gratis*, in the *Charity* Schools of these Dominions, as a Pledge to God, and the Publick, of the better Lives of the common Sort: And a publick Ratification, how much an indifferent Knowledge of *profitable* Things is more valuable, than a perfect Knowledge of unprofitable ones. What if the Lives of some *common Seamen* among Christians, who visit the Heathen Nations, are pretty equal,

Our Author, pag. 185. turns this against Christianity: But see his profound Ignorance in the natural Philosophy of this, handsomely exposed by Mr. Jackson, in his Answer to this Author, pag. 26.

equal, perhaps, to the common Seamen of Pagans: They are so much upon another Element, and distant so long together from publick Instruction, that it is no Wonder, these forget, what the other never learn'd.

AND as to the modern Pagans of *China* exceeding Christians in their Lives and Conversation, his Authorities don't prove it. *Bishop Kidder's* Words are a rhetorical Stretch, usual in Dissuasives from Vice, like that in *Isaiab*, 'The Ox knows his Owner, &c. but my People are less considerate and grateful than they': The Meaning of his Words is, to shame some Christians out of their bad Lives, by the better Lives that some Heathens lead; which may be very true; but they conclude not generally. He brings in *Monfieur Leibnitz* to the like Purpose; and Part of what he says, must bear the like Construction: Our Author brings him in as a great Statesman, and the first Passage he produces is, *Dici enim non potest, quam pulchre omnia ad tranquillitatem publicam, ordinemque hominum inter se, ut quam minimum sibi ipsi incommodent, supra aliarum gentium leges apud sinenses sint ordinata.* This seems to be the Key of all such Commendations of those People; extending no farther than their *Human* Virtues, which the Excellency of the Laws of that polite Nation has secured the publick Observance of. But, as all are agreed, they are the greatest of Idolaters, Who ever said any thing, who can say any thing for their becoming Piety towards God? Or their right Notions of him? Or their worshipping him free from Idolatry as the Light of Nature dictates? All which is the only Foundation that can be laid, for a Life and Conversation

tion according to the Law of Nature. As to *Navaret* who travell'd there, he, like some other Travellers, writes in the marvellous Stile, and certainly exaggerates: But other Travellers (*Le Compt* is one, as I remember) gives them no such favourable Character, but represents them the greatest Cheats in the World; greater Artists than Christians; glorying in every Quirk and Artifice of that kind; as a laudable Argument of Superiority of Understanding, in case they are not found out; and if they are, then they are only Fools; but no Remorse for Dishonesty, never once allow themselves to be *Knaves*; and he gives several Instances of it to his own Knowledge.

OUR Author is the fonder of this Peoples Character, because almost every Travel represents their *Literati*, their Magistrates, universally addicted to *Atheism*. As to the Corruptions in *Worship*, *Doctrine*, and *Practice* of the present Heathen World, See *Bishop of London* Second Part. p. 33.

AND because the *moral* Character of the *Turks*, is so apt to be extoll'd beyond that of Christians; by such Christians as our Author, it may be proper to subjoin an authentic Character of them likewise, given by a judicious Person, well acquainted with them. His Words are these ' I shall only tell you at present, that I think they ' [the *Turks*] are very far from agreeing with ' that Character which is given of them in Christianity; especially for their exact Justice, ' Veracity, and other moral Virtues. — But I ' must profess myself of another Opinion: For ' the

' Christian Religion, how much soever we live
 ' below the true Spirit and Excellency of it,
 ' must still be allow'd to discover so much Power
 ' upon the Minds of its Professors, as to raise
 ' them far above the Level of *Turkish* Virtue.
 ' 'Tis a Maxim I have often heard from our
 ' Merchants, that a *Turk* will always cheat
 ' when he can find an Opportunity. — Their
 ' Religion is framed to keep up great outward
 ' Gravity and Solemnity, without begetting the
 ' least good Tincture of Wisdom or Virtue in
 ' the Mind. You shall have them at their Hours
 ' of Prayer (which are four a Day always) ad-
 ' dressing themselves to their Devotions with the
 ' most solemn and critical Washings, always in
 ' the most publick Places, where most People
 ' are passing; with most lowly and most regular
 ' Prostrations, and a hollow Tone; which are
 ' amongst them the great Excellencies of Prayer.
 ' I have seen them in an affected Charity give
 ' Money to Bird-catchers (who make a Trade
 ' of it) to restore the poor Captives to their na-
 ' tural Liberty; and at the same time hold their
 ' own Slaves in the heaviest Bondage. And at
 ' other Times they'll buy Flesh to relieve Dogs
 ' and Cats; and yet curse you with Famine and
 ' Pestilence, and all the most hideous Execra-
 ' tions. They know hardly any Pleasure but
 ' that of the sixth Sense. And yet with all this
 ' they are incredibly conceited of their own Re-
 ' ligion, and contemptuous of that of all others,
 ' which I take to be the great Artifice of the De-
 ' vil, in order to keep them his own. They are a
 ' perfect visible Comment upon our Lord's De-
 ' scription of the *Jewish* Pharisees. In a word,
 ' Lust, Arrogance, Covetousness, and the most
 ' exquisite

‘ exquisite Hypocrisy, compleat their Character.
 ‘ The only Thing that ever I could observe to
 ‘ commend them in, is the outward Decency of
 ‘ their Carriage, the profound Respect they pay
 ‘ to Religion, and to every Thing relating to it,
 ‘ and their great Temperance and Frugality.’
Maundrell’s Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.
 Second Edit. Letter at the End.

BEFORE I leave the natural Religion of the Means, it may be observed, that all the Corruptions that are, or have been, in Religion Natural, or Religion Christian, have entered at the Door of the *Means* Natural, or the *Means* Christian, or both together. How many Corruptions and Superstitions has the Church of *Rome* brought in, to the utter Abuse, and to the little or no Effect, of the Evangelical Doctrine of *Repentance*? Their Sacrament of *Penance*; a bodily Exercise which the Apostle assures *profiteth nothing*; their *auricular Confession* to a Priest, and his Soul-deceiving *Absolution* by his own Authority; an enchanted, pleasing Circle of sinning and confessing, without ever parting with their Sin, but going on cheerfully upon a fresh Score, having paid their Reckoning for the former; What is it but an Act of Toleration for the Sinner, who has nothing to stand in Fear of, but some easy Penance? And thus the Laity parting with their Secrets throw the Reins of Government into their Priests Hands. Their Doctrine of *Attrition*, of *mortal* and *venial* Sins; of *Merit*, Works of *Supererogation*; of *Indulgencies*, *Jubilees*, *Purgatory*. All which invented *Additions* are the more shameful, as they are calculated purely for filthy Lucre, and worldly Grandeur. Never was *this Key* of the King-

dom of Heaven, which every Christian has the free Use of, though those gross Pretenders to Dominion over Faith and Conscience assume the sole keeping of it, so merchandized for Profit and Deceit. It is the profound Policy of that Church, to throw out its Net to bring in all those, who would gladly enjoy their Sins in this World, and yet abate nothing of their Hopes of Heaven to the last. It can be no wonder, that such an agreeable Cozenage of Conscience should continue so long, or gain so much Ground, having so very many Abettors and Fautors in all Places ready to swallow the Bait.

WITH respect to the other Means, *Prayer* and *Worship*, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, their superstitious and idolatrous Innovations, seem calculated for putting out the Eyes, and blinding the Understanding of their People, and perverting the right Notions of God, and their Saviour. Such is their *Transubstantiation*, *Adoration of the Host*, *Sacrifice of the Mass*, *Prayer to Saints and Angels*, (Brother Hereticks with the *Gnosticks*) *Use of Images*, *Prayer in an unknown Tongue*, *extream Unction*. The *Infallibility* of their Pope, or Church, and some other depending Doctrines, seem to be devised for the Infatuation of those, that are, or would be subject to it.

IN short, if similar Causes produce similar Effects, and their Superstition and Idolatry is parallel^a to that Superstition and Idolatry of the Heathens, What a dangerous State must they be in? What Corruption of Morals must abound? There is another Inconvenience; on the Side of Europe

^a See Dr. Middleton's late Book on that Subject.

Europe they chiefly border upon the *Turks*; which gives the Musselmens so wrong a Notion of Christianity, having hardly any other Opportunity to converse with it, as to prejudice them from embracing it. That there should be *Deists* many in Popish Countries is not at all to be admired at; it would be strange if there were not. As there must be many Persons of good Reasoning and Discernment, they can never seriously believe, that so much Pomp and Pageantry, so very many Absurdities in Worship, so great a Traffick, and so much usurp'd Authority for the Remission of Sins, could ever come from God, or be his true Religion. Such may appear Catholick outwardly, by conforming sometimes to the public Religion, whilst their *inward* Religion is, *sit anima mea cum philosophis*, as one declared upon a like Occasion¹; and they may comfort themselves that the Religion of Nature is much more *Catholic* than the other; though in many Places it happens, in fact, to have as many Corruptions and Deviations from the Law of Nature, as the other has from the Law of Christianity.

BUT that a Deist, whose profess'd Religion is Reason, should venture to appear, should openly plume himself in a *Protestant* Country, where Faith and Reason go hand in hand; where the pure Word of God in his reveal'd Will from Heaven is the Rule, and the Way to Salvation and Happiness; is not easy to be accounted for. Especially since those despised, exceptionable, positive Parts of Christianity, as they are called,

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I

Baptism,

¹ *Cum Christiani comodunt quod colunt, sit anima, &c. Averroes.*

Baptism, the *Lord's Supper*, the Doctrine of the *Mediator Christ Jesus* for the Remission of Sins, and for the Worship of God, have nothing in them, as they are set forth in the New Testament, but what is most agreeable to sound Reason; most serviceable and beneficial in carrying on the End and the Means of the Religion of Nature, to the greatest possible Perfection; and of all Religions that have yet appeared in the World the most promotive of the *Honour of God*, and the *Good of Men*, which is the grand *Criterion* of true Religion, to which our Author every where appeals¹. In short, where false Means of Religion, or the true ones falsely applied, are depended upon, there Virtue and Religion will be two distinct Things; but where the true Means are truly and prudently made Use of, Religion and Virtue are one and the same Thing, having one and the same View, centering in the same Point. I shall now join Issue with him in that Appeal; and endeavour to evince to those of his Way of Thinking, That they do not come up to, nor are they led by their own Principle, *Reason*; nor ever will be, 'till they seriously and sincerely embrace and practise the Religion of *Christ*. The next Thing in order is to treat,

¹ Pag. 59.



C H A P. IV.

Of BAPTISM.

IT will be proper to treat of this, and the Lord's Supper, before I shew the Use and Application of them for carrying on the Religion of the End, and of the Means; and the wretched, ignorant Misrepresentations of our Author, concerning them.

AND first I premise a Definition of a *Positive* Law from a Book ¹ that most have been approv'd of by our Author. '*Positive* Law is that which doth not by any Means flow from the general Condition of Human Nature, but from the sole Pleasure of the Lawgiver; though these Laws ought likewise to have their Reason and their Uses, in Reference to that particular Society for which they were enacted.'

AFTER knowing the Way of Salvation, and believing in the *Lord Jesus*, that there is Remission of Sins, and Acceptance with God for us, through him, upon the Terms to be performed by us in the new Covenant, *viz.* Repentance and Obedience, according to the Gospel; and after

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weighing

¹ *Puffend.* of the Law of Nature and Nations, l. i. vi. 18. pag. 76.

weighing every Thing that we undertake, in the Manner that all wise and effectual Resolutions are made ; follows a Resolution to undertake, and perform.

AND for the better fixing and corroborating that Engagement, which gives us, on our Part, the Reason of our Hope, that we shall receive all the Privileges and Benefits of that good Profession ; and forasmuch as some *Publick* and very *Solemn* Manner of taking on us that Engagement, and professing openly, before Witnesses, our full Purpose of Heart to *cleave stedfastly unto the Lord*¹, would lay a *moral* inherent Obligation upon us, in a constant Readiness to work morally upon our Powers, and by Means thereof, ‘ be a Kind
‘ of *moral* Bridle put upon our Freedom of
‘ Action, so that we cannot rightly take any
‘ other Way than what we are thus guided to :
‘ Not that it can so far restrain Mens Wills, as
‘ to render them unable to steer another Course,
‘ though at their own Peril².’

AND forasmuch as some outward visible *Symbols* of Initiation are the most significative, and impressive for affecting us the more deeply, and so becoming morally instrumental in binding and rivetting the Engagement more firmly in us ; agreeably to what is usual with Men, in solemn Engagements to God, or Man ; to superadd to Words, *Symbolical Action*, as additional Obligation upon the Party engaging, and covenanting ; as *kissing the Book*, *holding up the Hand* in an Oath, *signing*, *sealing*, and *delivering* in Deeds ; *delivering*

¹ *Act. xi. 23.*

² *Puffend, l. i. pag. 60. of moral Obligation.*

a Ring, joyning Hands in Matrimony, &c. It pleased our blessed Master to *institute* Baptism for that solemn Rite of Admittance into, and Profession of Christianity. And does not all the World allow it not only lawful, but in the most important Duty, *expedient*; and therefore fit and reasonable, to *vow, covenant, and tie* ourselves by the most *sacred Bonds, Stipulation or federal Rite*, to perform well and truly, to the best of our Power, those Obligations, which were before our manifest Duty, and Interest to perform? And does not all the World acknowledge moreover, that a *positive* Engagement particularly enter'd into, and solemnly avowed for doing or forbearing any thing, is a new adventitious Bond, and stronger Tie upon every Undertaker, than a simple *natural* Obligation to do, or forbear the same Thing? And does not the Scripture oblige to Stedfastness, and exhort to *bold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering*; to *provoke one another to Love and good Works*; and not to *forsake the assembling of ourselves together*, in Consideration of this *Baptismal Engagement*; *having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water*; And that we should abstain from *Sinning wilfully* any more? Heb. x. 22, to 27.

AND that after such a solemn Way of engaging and entering into the open *Profession* of performing, the Obligation to perform does thereby, *ipso facto*, contract new Force, and superinduce new Power and fresh Reason upon us, even the *Morality* of keeping Covenant, to be true to it; that it may become indissoluble, through the Act of our own Concurrence. Nor can the Con-

science of a *Deist*, which he calls his Honour, gainsay such good Morality. For as in the Nature of Things, the true Method of learning and engaging oneself to a Course of Virtue, is to be untaught and disengaged from Vice, and to *renounce* all the Friends, the Monitors, and the Ways of the latter, before he can effectually embrace the Party of the former, with its heavenly Leaders, Favourers, and holy Methods; so the Baptismal Engagement superinduces the indispensable Prudence of first *renouncing* all Hindrances, *the Devil and all his Works, &c.* because, otherwise, what follows would be to no Purpose, before it engages to believe, and practise, under Laws, and in a Kingdom, the Reverse of the other. Thus the Party within us, Reason and Conscience, which every Man experiences to be on the Side of Virtue, is early called forth, solemnly enter'd and pre-engaged to the Service of God and Virtue, to strive, militate, and subdue under his Aid and Directions, that other Party within us, which all Men likewise feel to be on the Side of Vice and Irregularity. Thus Baptism *represents to us* the true State and Circumstances of human Nature, and *our Profession* grounded thereupon.

AND as the undertaking to perform is imputed to us *publickly*, does it not lay us under the more lasting Restraint not to break it, from the Dishonour and Disgrace of doing the contrary? The Person, for Instance, who has received Money from one, who expects some Interest and Return suitable to the other's Opportunity of employing the Principal; and it is well known, that it is in his Power to make that Return to his Benefactor,

* Thus it is urged and imputed to *Timothy*. 1 *Tim.* vi. 12.

nefactor, and as well known that he is obliged in Reason so to do. Yet after that Obligation has acquired new Force and stronger Influence, by being plainly enter'd and particularly specify'd in a *Bond and Covenant*; and he has as good as set his *Hand and Seal* to it, and *delivered* it as his *Act and Deed*, is there not evidently by that Means, a greater Security for Performance contracted by, and upon all, who think of that Bond and Engagement? And is not this, almost, the exact Case of Baptism, and its Stipulation, in Conjunction with its Suppletory Confirmation, as with most Christians?

THUS, as Circumcision, which, according to the universal Opinion of its Use, was a solemn Rite of *obliging* to all Things in the Law of *Moses* (couching under it the spiritual Circumcision of the Heart from the Lusts of the Flesh, &c.) left a Character upon the Flesh, being a *visible Seal* of that Temporary Covenant: So the other being no less a solemn Rite of obliging to all Things in the *new and better* Covenant, leaves its invisible Character, and lasting Impression, upon the Soul and Mind, in Allusion to the other, called the Circumcision of the *Heart*; for acquitting ourselves, *bona fide*, of the religious Obligations lying upon us.

THE *Positive* Law of Baptism obliges us now, therefore, upon a double Tie of two immutable Things; 1. That natural Law of standing to one's Covenant and Engagement: 2. Our Obligation to obey the revealed Will of Heaven, where and when we know it to be a true Revelation; and that it plainly requires such a Method

of Compliance from us, and for our Good only. Should any Revelation pretending to come from thence, offer to bind us generally to break any of the plain Laws of Nature, it would be a plain Imposture to our Reason; because one Truth cannot contradict another Truth: And we are in the *first* Place sure and certain, that the Laws of Nature came from the Maker of Heaven and Earth, and are necessarily true; whilst the *Positive* Law from thence, for restoring us to Obedience to the other, through the Knowledge of the Mediator, is of later Date; and if it contradicts any previous moral Obligation must be necessarily false. But when we consider the *instituted* Part of Religion as grounded also in the Moral, *i. e.* in that which is secondarily good and moral, not merely in Virtue of its being commanded, but because it is moreover subservient to advance and perfect the natural Religion of the End, and of the Means, which result from the Relations, and from the peccant Condition we stand in by Nature; how serviceable, how sacred is the instituted Part of Christianity to the degenerate State of Man? How beneficial and good a Thing is Baptism?

It is very expressive of the original Signification of the Roman *Sacramentum*, a military Oath of Fidelity, to be true to their Colours and their *leading* Officer. And whereas we are so formed by Nature, as to be most strongly affected with visible Symbols, and sensibly impressed by outward Forms; the *Water* symbolically expresses, by *immersing* into it, the Death of Christ, or *being baptized into his Death*¹; *emerging* out of it, his Resurrection,

¹ Rom. vi. 3.

Resurrection, and our Rising with him unto Righteousness: The Resurrection of the Body, seems also to be con-noted and confided in; that as Sin was the Occasion of its Mortality, our dying to that will give Life to the other; and become the Ground of our glorifying God in our Body, as well as Spirit. *Washing, sprinkling, cleansing,* emphatically signifies, and con-notes, That the inward Man is to be washed, the Conscience sprinkled or cleansed from the Guilt of Sin, and from the Foulness of a troubled Mind, by the Blood of cleansing, just as our Bodies are by the Water.

AND as those are the visible Properties of Water, in *rerum natura*, they are severally adopted to signify *ex instituto divino*, to witness, to pledge, to point out, to print upon the Mind the other invisible Effect and Impression intended to be left upon us. It is accordingly declared, that Christ gave himself [to Death] for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of Water by the Word [of Truth,] able to cleanse and sanctify, as God's only Method of remitting Sins by the Mediator; collected therefore into a Compendium, or solemn Form at Baptism, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. To enable the better to produce that cleansing Effect ever after upon us, we are so solemnly initiated and dedicated by the Water, and by the Word: Which Word being from the Holy Ghost, makes the new Birth of Water, and of the Spirit, indispensibly necessary to Entrance into the Kingdom of God¹; that he might
present

¹ Job. iii. 5. called the washing of Regeneration, by the renewal of the Holy Ghost. Tit. iii. 5.

present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, &c.¹; for which Reason, we are exhorted after Baptism, to draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water²: But when and where the corresponding Effect answering to the outward and visible Sign of Water, and to the audible Form of Words, appropriated to that Occasion, viz. a clean Conscience, judiciously translated the Answer, or Stipulation, of a good Conscience towards God, does not follow and shew itself; we are told Baptism does not save us³; and consequently, where it does follow, that it will save us; being the Method of God in several Scriptures of his Word, for entering us into Covenant with himself, through the Mediator, for Remission of Sin, Adoption, Access unto God, Assistance of the Spirit, and every Help, Motive, and Favour that can nourish us up to the Felicities of eternal Life.

THUS the outward and visible Sign, and Form in Baptism, the Seal of Adoption, and Righteousness of Faith, (as was the Circumcision of Abraham) have a solemn moral Operation in causing in us the Effect that should always, but sometimes does not, follow, the inward and spiritual Grace, (the Soul's Covenant-State of Favour with God, as a Means whereby we receive the same, and a Pledge to assure us thereof) to assure us of the Death unto Sin, and new Birth unto Righteousness, incumbent upon our Engagements, begun and first born in that Ordinance, to grow up and

¹ Eph. v. 26, 27. ² Heb. x. 22. ³ 1 Pet. iii. 2.

and advance forward to Maturity all the Days of our Life.

AND as there can be but *one* Birth, or first Beginning of a Thing, one solemn Entry of taking upon us to be his Disciples, that Engagement may nevertheless be often revised, and solemnly recognized in drinking the Cup or Blood of the *New Covenant* in the *Lord's Supper*; therefore is there but *one Baptism*, the one only Way wherein our Mediator would have our Christian Calling begin, as there is but *one Lord*, through whose Rule over, and Intercession for us, there is Remission of Sins, &c. and *one Faith*, i. e. that he the one Lord, and he only, is the *one Mediator* between God and Man, in Opposition to the *many* Faiths among the *Heathens*, concerning this or that feigned Person, being the truest or best Mediator.

AND from that solemn Initiation into a *new* Relation, then taking a lasting Name upon us, this signifying, that we should be as ready to give a Reason of the Hope that is in us in the main Points of Belief, as to tell our Name, with respect to serving and pleasing God, old Things pass away, and all Things become a new State, consisting of *new* Principles of Life and Conversation; very fitly called a *new Birth*, being *born of God*, *new Creatures*, *created in Christ Jesus*, to good Works.

THE *Jews*, baptizing their Proselytes of Justice, call'd it *παλουργισίαν*, or *λύτρον παλουργισίας*; the Reason was, because after Baptism they believed, the Proselyte had a new Disposition,

sition, enter'd upon new Manners, and a new Institute of Life. It was frequent to say, 'a new baptized Profelyte was a new Infant'. In that Baptism they changed their Name, nor would they acknowledge their Relations after the Flesh to be any more their Relations: *Tacitus* accordingly ridicules them for it, *Imbuuntur contemnere Deos; Patres, Fratres, cognatos tanquam res viles contemnere*, L. V. They commonly said, and any Doctor in *Israel* might easily have known it, 'That except a Man was born of Water, he could not enter under the Wings of the Divine Majesty,' *i. e.* a Profelyte could not enter into their Church and Covenant without being baptized: To this our Lord alludes, in his *verily, verily, except a Man be born of Water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter, &c.*¹

THUS as Christianity was to go out from the *Jews* first unto all Nations, he adopted *their* Baptism with Improvements, into his Religion, when he was to exhibit his *παλιγγενεσία* or Manifestation of his new, and Death of the old Man; the whole Body of Sin *with* all its Members, dying with him to Sin by Immersion, and by Emerision rising with him to Newness of Life; Sons of God, and of the Resurrection, that grand final *παλιγγενεσία* to come; instead of their daily ceremonious *Baptism*, there should be but *one* solemn initiating Baptism, affecting the Soul more than the Body. By which they became also Members of his *one* Body, or Church; called out from the rest of the World, by the Preaching

¹ *Lactantius*, L. IV. cap. 27. speaking of converted baptized Heathens accordingly says, *They came under the Wings of Jesus.*

ing of the sole Way of Remission of Sins, Peace with God, and eternal Life through *Jefus Chrift*, and incorporated to have the Word always preach'd, and the Sacraments duly adminiftred; *Children of God by Adoption, Heirs, &c.* Children of *Grace*, of that Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God the Father, and from our Lord *Jefus Chrift*, in the Dispensation of his mediatorial Kingdom, by which we are faved, or have Remission of Sins; the Earnest, and the Seal of the Holy Spirit, and the Promise of eternal Life.

AND this *Grace*, or *Institution*, or reveal'd Will of Heaven concerning the Mediator, and our State of Peace and Favour with God thro' him, is oppos'd to a State by *Nature*¹, wherein there is no Knowledge of God in *Chrift* reconciling the World to himself, and consequently for want of that explicit Knowledge, more under a State of *Wrath*, than Favour; being all their Life-Time fubject to the Bondage of Mortality, under the inherent Contagion of *Death*, the *Wrath* of original Sin.

AND because the Knowledge of *Chrift* as Mediator between God and Man, dying and interceding for the Remission of Sins, is the chief Thing in the Gospel, as the chief Faith for fupporting that, is his being Son of God, and Son of Man: Hence it is, that as Baptism is faid to be into the *Death* of *Chrift*, fo the making Disciples to him is exprefs'd² by *baptizing in*, or into the Name of the Lord, or Lord *Jefus*, dying for us; a Part, and that the principal Part being put

¹ *Eph.* xi. 3.

² *Aas.* ii. 38. viii. 12, 16. x. 48. xix. 5.

put for the whole; though the Form of Baptizing might be *in the Name of the Father, &c.*

AND that being the principal Part of Discipleship, there is mention of Disciples being *baptized for the Dead*, 1 Cor. xv. 29. Mr. Lock upon the Place confesses 'He knows not what this baptizing for the Dead means, but that it *seems*' (says he) by the following Verses to be something wherein they exposed themselves to the 'Danger of Death.' That this is not only the seeming, but the *real* Meaning of this difficult Place, I apprehend may be made out thus. We read *Matth. xx. 22, 23. Mark x. 38, 39.* of *Baptized in the Sense of Suffering, with the Baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized;* Why may not St. Paul, who had convers'd much, and travell'd long with St. Mark, use the Word in the same Sense, when he is professedly arguing from the *Sufferings* of Christian Professors both where he broke off the Argument, and where he resumes the Thread of it, *ver.* after this? As if he should say, Why then are we Apostles *immers'd* in Sufferings, for the Sake of a dead, unrisen Saviour, and for the Hopes of a future Resurrection through him? Why are we so incomparably unwise, to be actually so great Sufferers for that Cause, and why do we *stand in Jeopardy* of yet more Sufferings that await us? For my own particular, *I protest by your* (it should be as in the *Margin*, and as Dr. Mills retains it in the Text, *our*) *Rejoicing, I die daily;* a Succession of Perils environ me every where. His *Swearing* in that Manner, as it is in the Original, by the common Rejoicing of all the Apostles and other Christians, by a sublime Turn of Thought,

Thought, gives *Existence* and certain *Being* to their *Rejoicing*: But how, or where could their *Rejoicing* possibly exist, but only in their certain Knowledge of a *Living, Arisen Saviour*; and in the Confidence of ample Rewards from him, when he raises their injured Bodies from the Grave; which, in time, will, as assuredly be done, as he has raised his own: ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν seems to be put in the plural, rather than the singular, because the Hopes of the Resurrection of the Dead in Christ, is inseparably connected with, and folded up in that of our Saviour's. In this Way of Understanding the Words, the Beauty, Strength, and Advantage of the Apostle's Argument is as conspicuous, as to *suffer* in the Flesh, and hope, and rejoice in the Spirit; for Christ being risen, and a Prospect of a recompensing Resurrection from him, is a stronger Evidence of any ones Believing in, and being assured of the Truth of both, than what can arise from any Disciples being *otherwise* baptized in his Name, or into his Death and Resurrection.

BAPTIZING was understood by the *Jews* in those Days, and consequently by the Apostles, who had first been *Moses's* Disciples, to be a synonymous Expression for *making Disciples*; the Baptism of *John*, was making Disciples of *John*,¹ preparatory to being Disciples to him who shou'd come after. The *Israelites* were baptized into *Moses*, i. e. became his Disciples after passing through the figurative Baptism of the Cloud and the Sea². *St. Paul* thanks God, he

¹ *John* iv. 1. i. 25.

² *1 Cor.* x. 2.

he baptized almost none¹, much less any in his own Name, because that had been the same as making them Disciples to himself, and not to Christ. The baptized in whose Name were at first called *Disciples* before they bore the Name of *Christians*, which was not till the XLIII. Year of Christ.

IN like manner, in a particular Case, to be a Disciple, or Professor of a Doctrine, is the same Thing (only more strongly express'd) as being baptized unto that Doctrine. Thus St. Paul, *Acts* xix. 3. puts the Question to those who had never heard the Doctrine, at least, not of the Receiving of the Holy Ghost, *Unto what then were ye baptized?* They answer, *Unto John's Baptism*, i. e. as it follows, the Doctrine of Repentance, saying, that they should believe on him that should come after, that is, on Christ Jesus. This Question plainly implies, that if they, John's Disciples, had been baptized in the common Christian Form, they must have known that there was a Holy Ghost. If therefore to baptize and make Disciples was so much the same, no wonder it is express'd by baptizing in the Name of the Lord Jesus, seeing Disciples to Him, rather than to the Father, or Holy Ghost, were made of all Nations, by baptizing them in the Name of all Three.

AND as Repentance and Remission of Sin was to be preach'd among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem², the chief Confession qualifying for Baptism we find in the Case of the *Taylor of Philippi*,

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¹ 1 Cor. i. 15.

² Luke xxiv. 47.

lippi, an *Heathen* of *Macedonia*, to be the *believ-*
*ing on the Lord Jesus Christ*², of the *Eunuch* an
Heathen of *Africa*, that *Jesus Christ is the Son of*
*God*³, and of *Cornelius* of *Cæsarea*, a *Jewish*
Profelyte, we may presume from *St. Peter's Ser-*
*mon*⁴, that he believed in his Heart the Lord
Jesus, that God raised him from the dead, that
he was Judge of quick and dead, Lord of all,
that our Peace with God was by him, and that
whoever believeth in him shall receive Remission
of Sin.

THE *falling down* of the *Holy Ghost*, or *re-*
ceiving him in those Days, was for Signs and
Wonders, sometimes, as in his Case, before
Baptism; yet Water Baptism, to the Confuta-
tion of some who deny the Necessity of it, was
expressly commanded for that very Reason, of
having receiv'd the Holy Ghost, to follow after,
as an instituted Means, and indispensable Di-
vine Appointment, for entering into the Pro-
fession of Christianity. Sometimes not till after
Baptism, especially after *Prayers*, and *laying on of*
Hands of the Apostles (for confirming the
Churches, or appointing proper Persons to the
Ministry) who were extraordinarily qualified
for it, being themselves previously baptiz'd with
the Holy Ghost and with Fire, descending upon
them in cloven Tongues, as of Fire. It appears
then that the chief Effect and Purpose of Bap-
tizing in the Name of the Father, &c. both *Jews*
and *Gentiles* was putting on Christ⁵, in whom *Jew*

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² xvi. 31, 33.

³ viii. 37, 38.

⁴ x. 36, &c.

⁵ Gal. iii. 27.

and Greek are *one new Man*, *εἰς ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου*, Eph. ii. 15. For confessing, calling upon his Name (reciprocal to his Name being first called upon them) than which there is none other under Heaven given unto Men, whereby they must be saved, or have their Sins remitted; doing all Things in his Name for Acceptance with God.

AND as there is a Summary or Abridgment of all Things in Heaven or Earth in *Christ*, much more of all Things in Christianity; so the chief Knowledge of him is recapitulated, in being *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, as the completest Mediator between both, dying for us, rising from the dead, sitting Intercessor at the right Hand of God, and coming to judge the World. *God without a Mediator will*, at the final Consummation, *be all in all*; which supposes him *now* to be all in all to us, *in and through* the Mediator, who is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of God's Dispensation towards Man.

BAPTISM in the Name of the Father, &c. being then chiefly (whatever other Belief there was as to the *Trinity* and *Unity*) for promoting Faith and Fidelity to the *Lord Jesus* the Mediator, for Remission of Sins, eternal Life, and making Disciples to him; in the Acts of the Apostles, some are, therefore, particularly said to be baptized in the *Name of the Lord*, or *Lord Jesus*, at the same time they were most likely baptized according to the express and seemingly indispensable Commandment, *in the Name of the Father*, &c. Baptizing in the Name of *Jesus*, may not unfitly mean being baptiz'd in Virtue of his *Authority*,

¹ Eph. ii. 10. ἀνακεφαλαίωσις.

thority, and according to his positive Commandment, *in the Name of the Father, &c.* Or a Part may be express'd for the Whole, as being so principal a Thing of that Rite.

FORASMUCH as initiating into the Name or Profession of *Jesus Christ*, that he is the Son of God, the Lamb dying, according to the Passage then read out of *Isaiah*, *Acts* viii. 32. or into *the Way*, or *that Way*, often mentioned in the *Acts*, of worshipping and coming to God, thro' the Lord *Jesus* the Mediator, for the Remission of Sins, and all other Benefits of his Mediation, was the principal Thing in that Form of Baptism, and the chief View of the Commandment. And this may serve to solve the Difficulty, why some are said to be baptized in the Name of the Lord, or Lord *Jesus*, at the same time the Command and the Form of Words stand peremptory, *in the Name of the Father, &c.*

THERE is mention, *Heb.* vi. 2. of the Doctrine of *Baptisms* in the plural Number, though we are assured elsewhere¹ there is but *one* Baptism: As written to the *Hebrews*, many of whom were baptized with *John's* Baptism, it probably means that of *John*, and that also in the common Christian Form; because this last was never repeated²; but to the Baptism of *John* was afterwards added that in the Christian Form³; or, the Doctrine of *Suffering*, then a Fundamental of Christianity, may be implied in the Plurality of *Baptisms*, as above explain'd. That the *trine* Immersion was the Occasion of the Expression, there

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¹ *1 Cor.* xv. 28.

² *Eph.* iv. 5. ³ *Acts.* viii. 16, 17. xix. 5.

is no Grounds to believe, because so much later than that Time.

If then there is any new and farther Obligation, in firmly resolving, covenanting, and steadfastly *undertaking* to perform what is antecedently our indispensable Duty; if any Fidelity in being true to ones Profession and Engagement, any Force in a Promise, in a Promise before many Witnesses, any Sacredness in a Vow and Promise to God: All these concur in accumulating the solemn and sacred Obligation so wisely intended to be superinduced in Baptism. And if such solemn federal Undertaking is an excellent moral Means for furthering good Manners; and if there is a notorious Reasonableness, Honour, and Morality in performing one's Contract, as all Books of *Civil Law* agree, especially when made in the Solemnity of a Rite, exhibiting an outward and visible Sign and Form, typifying, indicating, and federally engaging, inward Purity and Holiness: We must acknowledge, there is great Reasonableness and Morality in the plain easy Rite of Baptism, as it is a *Divine Institution*; not arbitrary, but generally necessary; and therefore *positive*, because most useful for effecting the Religion of the End, and of the Means.

NAY, before it became an Institution of *Christianity*, it was called by our *Saviour* himself, a Branch of the Law of *Righteousness*, *Matth. iii. 15.* not because it was any where expressly commanded to the *Jews*, for that is no where to be found, but because it is a *right Means*, of a *moral* Tendency for better performing the great moral Law of everlasting *Righteousness*, obligato-

ry upon all Men, the *Roman* Soldiers, as well as the *Jews*. And therefore our blessed Lord and Master, intending to adopt Baptism into his Religion, that he might be an *Example*, in using the most *solemn* Means and Method of *undertaking* to discharge the moral Law of perpetual Obligation, which he was about to preach up, and practise, over-ruled the *Baptist*, (at the same time he attested his Function, as his Fore-runner, and that his Baptism was from Heaven, and not from Men,) and was baptized with his Baptism of *Repentance*, which leads the Way to Righteousness and better Obedience. That we, who have indeed Sins to repent of, might more readily follow his Steps, as well as obey his Commandments, in embracing the Method he has instituted for entering into Covenant, and being a Member of his Church, where Remission of Sins, and all other Blessings of his Mediation, are particularly promised and insured.

AND as the Design of Baptism, or the Christian Calling to eternal Life, is *professing a good Profession before many Witnesses*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. So our Lord, before he enter'd upon his great Undertaking of saving the World, had many Witnesses at his Baptism. The Voice of the Father from Heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; the Holy Ghost lighting upon him, demonstrated him the *Lamb of God* for taking away the Sins of the World; as well as by many miraculous Works, wrought by the same Spirit, bearing witness afterwards, that he was sent of God, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Said to be justified in, or by the Spirit and the Water, or the Testimony given by St. John at his Baptism, *This is*

he who cometh after me, who was before me. All these besides the *Blood*, bore Record to the same *Truth*, that Christ himself says he came to bear witness to, *John xvii. 37.* that he was the Son of God, the appointed King, Prince of Life, Saviour, Mediator in the mediatorial Kingdom of Reconciliation between God and Man.

IT appears then in Conclusion, 1. That they, who reject Water Baptism altogether, are guilty not only of disobeying Revelation, but the Reason of Things, by neglecting a moral fitting Means of Righteousness, as well as contemning and superseding a *positive Institution* of Christ.

2. THAT *Problem or Query* : *Whether there be any Necessity* (even upon the Principles of Mr. Wall's Hist. Infant Baptism) *for the continual Use of Baptism among the Posterity of baptized Christians?* May be easily solv'd. For, if Baptism has a moral Operation of very great Advantage to the baptized, as the Person *once* solemnly enters into the Christian, or second Covenant, it ought to be perpetual to all Generations, personally obliging every Individual, capable of Obligation; and yet it will not follow, that it ought therefore to be repeated on that Account; because a *solemn Entrance* into a Covenant, founded upon the Death of the Mediator of it, into which Death Baptism is the prescribed Initiation, ought to be but once*; especially since there are, as is acknowledged—

* Mr. Emlyn's Tracts, who seems desirous to have it solv'd, pag. 456.

2 The *Abyssine* Christians of *Ethiopia* have a very absurd Custom of repeating their Baptism every Year, upon the Feast of *Epiphany*. *Varen. de diversis Religionibus*, p. 246.

knowledg'd by the Querist, ' other sufficient Ways to revive the Sense of our Duty to God, and of our religious *Bonds*, viz. by the other religious Duties of our Profession, and in particular by the *Lord's Supper*. It does not follow, by Parity of Reason, because the *Posterity* of Profelytes among the *Jews*, (whose Ancestors upon their becoming Profelytes having been baptiz'd, the whole Family, Children with their Parents) were counted *holy*, not needing afterwards any Initiation by Baptism, according to the current Maxim, *If the Root is holy, so are the Branches*; that therefore Christian Baptism was only intended for those who became Profelytes to Christianity from an Infidel State; and not for the Descendants from Christian Parents born in the Church. For there is this manifest Disparity in the Cases; the Privileges of the mosaic Covenant were chiefly *temporal*, and consequently inheritable, and therefore Children were initiated at the same time with their profelyted Parents, that the *whole* Stock of the present Family being made holy, their Posterity might be holy, and inherit the Blessing they were incorporated into, so much at least, as Baptism without Circumcision admitted the *Profelyte of the Gate* into; for if they were Profelytes of *Justice*, Circumcision was added to Baptism; and though Baptism was omitted to their Offspring and Descendents, Circumcision was not.

BUT the Privileges of the Christian Covenant, which God promis'd the *Jews* to make in the After-Days under their *Messiah*, were spiritual, as the Remission of Sins, &c. and therefore not

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inheritable at all; though young Children, before they knew the Difference between Good and Evil, inhered the Name holy, if either Parent was *Christian*: If not inheritable it follows, that the Posterity of baptized Christians ought to be likewise baptized. The ascertaining the *Remission of Sins* by washing and baptizing into the *Death* of Christ, and the *Adoption* of Children by Renewal of the Holy Ghost, and other Privileges of the new Covenant, and making the Conditions of it *personal* to every one's Engagement and Practice, is the personal permanent Use and Advantage of Baptism.

3. As to the Time of baptizing in *Infancy*, that is assisted and reliev'd by the due Use of its *Appendage*, *Confirmation*, which should rather be look'd upon, where Infant-Baptism wholly prevails, a finishing Part of Baptism, in order either to preserve the true Nature of Things, or recover the primitive Practice. Much Good may come of that *charitable Work*, as well as great Comfort to the Parents, in bringing little Children, to Baptism and to Christ, who are certainly capable of his *Blessing*; most undoubtedly blessed and happy to them, when they are afterwards at the Years of Discretion and Choice, brought on to be perfected

1 Cor. vii. 14. *Else were your Children unclean: but now are they holy.* In the Reasoning of Men, *conclusio semper sequitur deteriorem partem*: But it is otherwise in the Reasoning of God towards little Children; for if one of the Parents is Infidel, the other Christian, the Child is of the Family of those that are sanctified, is, as to its Root and Stock, of the Family of the *Saints*, or *holy*, the primitive Name of Christians.

at Confirmation. At which Solemnity, all the Ends and Purposes of Baptism are recogniz'd, and become personally binding in Discharge of Proxy's Engagements. Guardians, such Nature has made Parents and other Assistants call'd in at their Choice, are wisely allow'd by all Laws to do every Thing tending to the certain *Benefit* and *Advantage* of *Minors*; at the same time what is transacted to their Prejudice, is voidable by them at the Years of Discretion. They promise and engage, not what the Infant shall do, but what he shall be *taught, call'd upon, and reminded* to do; what at the Years of Discretion the Person would be obliged to do, whether any Body had undertaken and promised for him, or not. For that Obligation and Engagement, in its own Nature, becomes *Personal*, as soon as the Youth becomes a *Person, i. e.* has the Use of Reason to understand Religion.

4. It follows, that if any have ignorantly receiv'd the Lord's Supper before Baptism, they ought nevertheless to be baptized.

5. It seems that the principal Sealing of the new Covenant in either of the Sacraments, is by the *Blood* of the Mediator only, *slain*, and seal'd from the Foundation of the World, equally in Trust, and devoted in Interest to both Parties, God, and Man. God ratifies the Covenant, and recognizes the Seal in his Oracles to Man. *The Foundation or Covennat of God standeth sure, having this Seal of mutual Consent between the Parties: God knoweth, approveth in Blessings and Privileges, who are his, in the calling to eternal Life*

Life in Christ ; and let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, in that Calling, and enters into that Covenant by Faith in the Mediator, depart from all Iniquity. And Man, in his Sacramental Promises to God, ratifies and recognizes it on his Part, by so endeavouring to undertake, and then confirm his sacramental, personal Purpose of fulfilling the Terms of it. The mutual Stipulations of both Parties of the Covenant in the Mediator thereof, follows the sealing by his Blood, and are the mutual Ratification and Confirmation of it, to the World's End.





C H A P. V.

Of the Lord's Supper.

THIS solemn Rite is positively instituted for *recognizing* Faith in the Mediator of the new Covenant, and other Engagements professed and undertaken at Baptism: Like the former, it has something Moral, something Positive: The positive or instituted Part being grounded upon select Reasons and Fittests.

I. *THE Morality* of it, when closely considered, will be found to consist in the *Fitness* of remembering, and the *Reasonableness* of obeying the Command, and recognizing the *Kindness* of so signal a *Benefactor*; celebrating with Praise and Thanksgiving the Mercy of God, and the Love of our Redeemer to such undeserving Objects; but especially re-inforcing, and making good whatever Engagements we have laid upon ourselves, when we solemnly entered into the *new Covenant* by Baptism, and took the Calling of eternal Life upon us, and our Profession of being Disciples to such a Benefactor and Saviour.

ALL Mankind are agreed in the Duty and Morality of this, and have, upon Occasion, put it into Practice: And they are no less agreed, that

that the Commemoration ought to be suitable to the Benefaction. If it is what all are interested in, it ought to be publickly observed for that Reason, by all capable of joyning in such a solemn Memorial. Was it of a worldly Nature, and bodily Advantage only, Demonstrations of bodily and worldly Joy had been sufficient Commemoration: But if of a rational spiritual Kind, importing the highest Comfort, and solemnly by Symbols expressing the most important Truth in all the World, the Knowledge of the Peace of God (in his Method of remitting Sins) which passeth, *i. e.* surpassing all other Understanding and Knowledge, to every Heart and Soul that is sensible of the Burthen of Sin, and seeketh its Happiness in the Assurance of God's Favour, through the Ways and Means of better Obedience, which such a solemn Method of Assurance has put us upon; then every Body must acknowledge, that the Commemoration, like the Kindness, ought to be rational, spiritual, solemn, for Reasons drawn chiefly from another Life: And as frequently as is agreeable to the Mind of such a beneficent Friend; which is just as often as Prudence consulting the spiritual Advantage we may receive thereby, does dictate, where there is Convenience and Opportunity for it.

THE whole World, from the common dictate of Reason, has been in Possession of such a publick Gratitude and Behaviour towards their most known and eminent Benefactors, without any Appointment from them: Nay, to that Degree of after-Respect, for fear of falling short, and so early as before the Flood*, that they deified them,

* See *Sanchoniatho's Phœnician History*, pag. 234, compared with pag. 244.

them, though as much and as mere Creatures as themselves. By parity of Reason, where a Benefactor, the *Son of God*, is known to descend upon Earth, and at the greatest of human Exigence, an Interposition worthy of such a Condescension! appeared in due Time in the Likeness of Men, and Form of a Servant, to minister to all Men, teaching the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and giving an Example of all good living; patiently suffering for it; but most gloriously of all, dying a painful and a shameful Death, for the Remission of the Sins of all Men, even of his Enemies, when they will become their own and his Friends; rose again from the Dead, that Life and Immortality might be brought to the Light of Mens Eyes; ascended into Heaven, not to desert, but be more divinely present with his People, their ever-living Patron for promoting all the Mercies and Favours they can want or desire, and Joy and Happiness more than they know how to desire. I say, where-ever these Things are known, and known in all the Certainty that can assure the World of the Truth, both of the Fact, and of the Favour of such a Benefit, does not an indispensable Obligation, even upon the Foot of moral Gratitude, press and importune us to commemorate such a good, great, and marvellous Benefactor?

If he has obliged us beyond Requitall, that is so much the greater Reason for our lasting Acknowledgment. If he requires it peremptorily, and has appointed the Manner of it in general Directions, What is our Compliance in that Case, in common Reason, but common Gratitude? Is it not meet, and right to bring all the appointed
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Ends into the Memorial, in order to render our Participation more worthy of it? It is meet, right, and bounden Duty, that the Partakers, while they are partaking of the Sign of the signify'd Thing, which procured them so many Benefits, should rejoice with the greatest *Eucharist* and Ovations of Praise and Thanksgiving for what has been done for them. The reasonable and grateful Part within us, consents unto it, and readily subscribes to that Christian Part of our Profession. Thus far it appears, that this instituted Part of Christianity grows out of that Root of Morality, which is rooted in the Hearts of all Mankind. Forasmuch as our merciful and gracious Lord hath so done his marvellous Works, that *they ought to be had in Remembrance*, and the Work of Redemption above all other Works.

II. THERE is a *positive instituted* Part, which the Reason of Man even acquainted with so admirable, and so respected a Benefactor would not, uncommanded by competent Authority, have pitch'd upon of its mere self; and yet after the Appointment, cannot but acknowledge the Excellency and the Reasonableness thereof. And that in two Respects, 1. As the Remembrance is appointed to be celebrated in the Usage and Application of external Signs and Symbols: 2. In the particular ones of eating Bread and drinking Wine.

I. FIRST, that the Memorial of the precious Death of our Divine Friend should be preserved and repeated in the Use of any Signs, Reason of itself would not have suggested. For why might it not be brought to Mind, and piously reflected

on by all Hearers, when it is read out of the sacred History where it is recorded? Why not by a Congregation of Thinkers meeting together, as we are told *some* do, at Times, in profound Silence, to look at one another, and think over the Affairs of Religion? But one that is wiser than either, even the Wisdom of God, who best knows whereof we are made, order'd Matters otherwise, and by his appointed Method, designed to attract and center the *whole* Man to a Transaction; which, if not his own Fault, is the most important to his Interest, to his unspeakable Comfort, and his endless Benefit: In order to which, the Senses were not to be diverted at the Solemnity, but purposely fixed and engaged upon the Business likewise: He knew what we ourselves must confess by an 'old Observation, which is, and ever will be attested in Experience, as long as the World endures,

*Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt Oculis subjecta fidelibus.* Hor.

that we are not naturally so strongly affected with what we hear, as what we *see*. It pleased him accordingly in that solemn Commemoration to con-note in particular the solemn Matter of Fact with solemn Action, and outward and *visible* Signs *evidently before the Eyes* of Christians, *setting forth Christ crucify'd*; that the profitable Remembrance might approach the better on all Sides, and make its Entrance the more effectually at all Avenues of the Mind: At the *Ears* hearing the sacred Institution and good Devotion belonging to the Business; at the *Mouth*, the Inlet of bodily Life and Sustenance; at the *Eyes* most

most especially, which still most fixes and captivates the Reflection of the inward Man: That he might, by all Means, impregnate our Souls full of the fruitful Consideration of the best Kindness of our Lord and Saviour thus dying for us, and the innumerable Benefits receivable from his Blood-shedding, upon the faithful Performance of the Conditions on our Part.

‘ IN all this the great Wisdom and Goodness of God is to be admired, in making this Kind and merciful Provision for his Church; who, considering our Frame, and how large a Share *Sense* has in our human Composition, was pleas’d in Condescension to our Infirmary, to address himself to us by that weaker Side of our Nature; and lest, in such a Crowd of sensible Objects as we daily converse with, we should (as we are too apt) be tempted to forget him; was pleased by those very *sensible* Objects to bring us to himself, by making Use of some of them as his Remembrancers, and as Steps whereby we might ascend to the Contemplation of the most spiritual and heavenly Mysteries.’

FOR any therefore, after our Saviour has taken such abundant Care, to institute external Signs of the greatest Signification, concerning the distinguishing Parts of Christianity, for edifying and building us up in his Religion, by an Ordinance for ever, till his second coming again in visible Appearance to all Men; to pretend to be so spiritually refined, as not to need such a carnal Ordinance to help them the more solemnly and effectually to remember the Death and Passion of Christ; and so quite lay aside this,

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as they do the other Sacrament of Water Baptism: What is it but to forget that they themselves live in the Flesh? And for so long must depend upon external Means and Ordinances for the Promotion of spiritual Things.

To be so unreasonable therefore as to drop one Half of the Reason of Things, with a Design to shew themselves but Half-Men in this Life, with respect to their particular Constitution, as if they were peculiarly exempted above all People from being *Whole-Men*, made up of Sense as well as Reason, of Flesh match'd with Spirit, is certainly a very irrational, unmanlike Spirituality, swelling or stretching itself beyond the present Measures of a Man. No Man, surely, in his present Station in the Body, ought to pretend to a reasonable Service of God, in Methods which exclude and put asunder what God, the supreme Reason, has joined together in this World, for Life. For that very Reason, and Respect to the Body, the Apostle beseeches the *Romans* xii. 1. to *present their Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to the Lord, which is our reasonable Service*: As long as God and Reason require the same Things, and Body and Soul live together in this State of Probation, publick Worship, where the Body attends as well as the Spirit, must be fed and kept up with some External of Religion for the better Edification of the Soul, and for that visible Communion in one Bread, and one Body, with all its Members, holding of one Head, which promotes a mutual Excitement to the Duty of mutual Love, and Care of one another.

WE may as well pretend to sustain the animal Life of the Body without Externals, as the Life which is hid invisibly in *Christ the Head*, without visible Memorials of him: Especially since the external Rites and Symbols are so simple, so few, and so suitable, as instead of stifling, quickens that Life; in lieu of diverting, fixes the Attention of the Mind, and are so far from obscuring, that they help to realize the great Fundamental of his Religion, and therefore are not to be look'd upon as *indifferent* by any Christian, like unto the Externals of Man's ordering. To supersede therefore professedly such a solemn Ordinance and external Help, what is it but to charge *Christ* foolishly, for enjoining his Followers that Method of keeping up a perpetual Memorial of him, 'till his coming again? And as the Commands of our Lord are not arbitrary, but wisely adjusted to our Constitution of Body and Mind, and purposely calculated for the Promotion of our greatest Good; the omitting of it must needs be the pretermittting the divinest Means and Advantage for being good: And to do it under a Pretence, that his coming again from the Place whither he was gone to make Preparation for his Followers, is already fulfill'd, by his being come (as they phrase it) *into their Hearts*, is not only to reject the Necessity of any solemn Remembrance of our Lord's Death, but, in Effect, rejecting his coming again to judge the World; for if he has no other coming again but what they assign, they may as well, and by the same Conceit, allegorize the Resurrection as past already; which is to turn those Parts of Christianity into mere natural Religion, or *Deism*.

IF therefore external Signs and Symbols are so well fitted to the more solemn Occasion of commemorating the Death of Christ, and are so many visible repeated Memorials, both of our Christian Benefits receivable from the new Covenant in his Blood, and of our Christian Duties corresponding to it in the whole Tenor of our Lives ; and if our Lord has expressly affixed those helpful Significations with a Design to edify us the more, as often as we would reflect upon his Death and Passion in that most solemn Manner ; it follows, that that Position, viz. ‘ The spiritual eating of Christ is common to all Places, as well as the Lord’s Table’ : If it means, that it may be done every where, and *without* the appointed Symbols used at the Lord’s Table, it must needs be a Mistake ; because it is a dangerous opening the Way to the general Disregard of the appointed Symbols ; and consequently a disuse, or superficial Use of the Lord’s Supper.

EVIDENT it is, that as often as we reflect upon the then and there instituted End of Christ’s Blood shed for the Remission of Sins, our Faith in Christ the *Mediator* of the new Covenant founded in his Blood-shedding, as a *full, perfect, sufficient* Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, may be very opportunely enliven’d, strengthen’d, and confirm’d at that Solemnity ; past Wickedness naturally making us diffident of Forgiveness, and Access to God there presented to Remembrance, and exhibited to our Faith. The Want of which Observation, seems to have occasion’d another Mistake in the same Author, who rejects the Notion of Faith in Christ being

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¹ Hales of Eaton, Tract upon the Sacrament, pag. 57.

at all confirmed there; affirming, that 'the receiving it [the Lord's Supper] is [only] a Sign of Faith confirmed, and that Men come to it, to testify that they do believe, not procure that they may believe': Where from what follows, he plainly means by *Faith in Christ* an Assent only to the Truth of Christianity; which indeed ought first to be supposed as confirmed in that Sense in every approaching Communicant; but still, consequent to that, may he not at that Solemnity, feed and confirm the Reliance of his Mind upon the comfortable Doctrine of Remission of Sins, though often repeated, through his Blood? Which is a *Faith in Christ*, most seasonable, and particularly belonging to the Lord's Supper.

2. THE second Thing positively instituted, is the Appointment of *Bread and Wine*, which the Lord commanded to be received, as the *only* Signs and Symbols for commemorating his Death and Passion. They seem to be enjoin'd in particular for these Reasons. *First*, Because had our Saviour given a general Command for the solemn Remembrance of his Death by some Sort of visible Signs or other, without mentioning any Particulars; his Disciples, in that Case, had been variously divided in chusing, some this Sort, some another, knowing no one particular External having necessary Connexion with such a Duty: A general Distraction would have ensued; little Union, and therefore no such Thing as *Communion* with fellow Christians. The generality, perhaps,

¹ Pag. 54. The same Answer will solve that Query, *an semper communicandum per Symbola?* In Grotius's Tract de *cana administratione*, &c.

haps, would have had Recourse either to painting, graving, carving, or moulting some tragical Representation of such a Death; the Consequence of which had been, that the Image or Picture would have intercepted from the generality of gazing Communicants, and terminated upon its outward visible Self all that religious Regard, which belonged only to the Thing signify'd. And so the Death and Passion of Christ would, by Degrees, have been swallowed up of the *Sign*.

FOR the Prevention of such pernicious Superstition, and Confusion in a Matter of so much Importance, Bread and Wine (wherein there is no Similitude to the Thing intended, save only in the breaking one, and pouring out the other) were the Signs commanded on Purpose by our Lord, that it might never be mistaken for the Thing represented. It is evermore the Nature and Office of a Sign, signifying *ex instituto*, to be essentially and constantly different from the Thing signify'd, never to pass in Reality for, but ever be distinct from it. When a Word or Expression is therefore in that Case designedly figurative, and symbolical, it can never, at the same Time, signify literally, but always figuratively; the Moral or Figurative, must be the true Sense, and not the Literal; the *moral* and *literal* are opposite in all such Instances of Language; the latter killeth, (as in the Church of *Rome*) the former giveth the Life or Meaning.

IF the Sign signifying, and representing, is a visible Body present, then the Body and Blood of Christ signify'd and represented, cannot possibly

be present likewise; but, of Necessity, must be *absent*; nor can it represent any thing but what is true of the absent Body, not its present offering up upon the Cross, but that it *was once* offered up. If the Body was indeed present, as some absurdly contend, what need of *commemorating* a Thing *present*? But if it is to be commemorated according to the Commandment of the Institutor, it must necessarily for that Reason be absent, to make a *Remembrance*. It signifies not as a *Type*, for that has Reference to something future; but as a Token and Pledge, both of its Absence, and of its being offered up once heretofore. And seeing it is the very Nature and Essence of a Sign or Symbol to be figurative and *representative*, not proper and literal; it must likewise be essential to the Words instituting, to mean *figuratively*, and by Way of *Representation only*. And if it is a Contradiction to, and Destruction of a Sign, to become the Thing signify'd and represented, behold! a new Contradiction in that Gulph, which swallows up all Sense and Reason in Religion, the *Romish Transubstantiation*.

Secondly, ANOTHER Reason for selecting the Elements of Bread and Wine might be, because with the generality of Mankind, they are as common as Air and Water, *viz.* as much as is needful for that Purpose, is very procurable; that all Excuse as to Charge or Difficulty, or Unpalatableness, for abating the Remembrance that Way, might be for ever silent. Where Wine is not to be had, as is the Case of some Countries, the external Means are not for that Reason to be laid aside, but others substituted bearing the nearest Resemblance

Resemblance to Wine: In that Circumstance, Mercy is better than Sacrifice.

AND if a farther Reason of appointing Bread and Wine may be drawn from their great and common Usefulness to the Nutriment of the bodily Life, one for strengthening, the other making glad the Heart of Man, the solemn Remembrance of the other, by an apposite and significant Analogy, is so understood to be the Food and Sustenance of our spiritual Joy and Life, *bid with Christ in God*, that its Peace and Comfort is as dependent upon the Memorial of that Method of God remitting Sins in Christ, as the Body upon Meat and Drink. A Child is not more an Emblem of Humility, than the other Signs are of our *Need* of Christ crucified.

As in Baptism, supposing a State of Defilement at any Age, and it was, in Fact, customary with the *Jews*, to baptize whom they receiv'd into their Religion, from a State of *Gentilism* or *Idolatry*, as a solemn Intimation of *cleansing* them from the *Pollution* of Idols, and a publick Method for professing themselves *Profelytes*; nothing could be a proper external Sign and Form, with the Words, for initiating into a pure and holy Religion, and for renouncing what was otherwise: So, supposing a *Need* of feeding, strengthening, and refreshing our Minds, with the Recollection of what Christ has done for us, in the best Solemnity, which is that prescribed; What so proper external Sign could be devised, as Bread and Wine, which the Lord commanded to be received? Neither one nor t'other is a dumb, difficult Hieroglyphick, but a visible

foodful, chearful Occasion for the Eyes of Faith to behold, as in a Glass, the Food and Comfort of the Soul: And, as our Lord originally instituted it *after* Supper, that shew'd the *outward* Man had no need of it, but that the *inward* Man was thence obliged to take that Occasion, the better to think and eat of the Bread that came down from Heaven, for the Life of the World, as the most foodful, serious, cogitative Thing.

Thirdly, A further Reason of these familiar and procurable Signs might be a Care *ex abundanti*, for preserving the principal Belief and Doctrine of Christianity in the World, *viz.* the DEATH OF CHRIST. For the Truth of a past Matter of Fact may be kept up from Generation to Generation, when some solemn Rite or Solemnity is instituted for perpetuating the Memory of it; and the Reason of the Solemnity is continually handed down by some *written* Tradition, with the Custom and Usages of the same, (in *Epitome* of the Record) to the latest Posterity. And thus suppose the worst that could possibly happen, all the Writings of the New Testament perish'd in many Nations, the Memory of this capital Truth of the Christian Religion, might not have been quite lost, but transmitted from Father to Son, from Age to Age, as an inviolable *Prescription* in the *solemn* or sacramental Use of those cheap Things, as long as the Sun or Moon endureth, and be better, and more generally transmitted, than by Medals, Pillars, or Inscriptions. The indicative propheticall Type or Prelude of this, the sacrificing the Life of a *Lamb* instituted by God after the Fall, as appears by the Practice
of

of *Abel*, *Gen. iv.* importing the Will of his offended Majesty, *That without shedding of Blood there was no Remission of Sins*, was thus universally spread and perpetuated through the whole Race of Mankind, in all Parts of the known World; varied indeed and corrupted sufficiently in various Places, by *oral* Tradition, but still holding Resemblance to the primitive Pattern, (a Practice no otherwise accountable in the Consent of all the Race, but that they certainly receiv'd that Tradition, as they did their Blood in their Veins, from one common Parent.) But that being the Shadow of the Sacrifice of Christ, where the Substance has enter'd, the Darknets, with the bloody Sacrifice, together with the Idolatry and Superstition superadded, vanishes like a Shadow; and there remaineth the *Memorial* of the only valuable Blood, or true Sacrifice, once offer'd, by Signs and Symbols, as a sacred Occasion to Reason, to reflect in due manner, and to right Purposes, upon the blessed Institutor, was to last to all Ages and Generations.

It was at the *Postcenium* usual with the *Jews* at the Conclusion of the *Passaver*, when Bread and Wine were serv'd upon the Table, purposely for the Guests to take some of each, and to take thence withal a religious Occasion to *bless* and *thank* God for those Creatures, as well as for their *Deliverance out of Egypt*: Then it was our Lord and Master took the Creatures of *Bread* and *Wine*, seiz'd upon the *commemorative* Usage and Custom, converts, and enjoins it (blessing God upon that new Occasion) to the Remembrance of *his dying, and his Blood shedding*; an infinitely greater Deliverance than the other,
Thenceforward

Thenceforward the *Subject* both of *Remembering*, and *Blessing* was changed. Thenceforward succeeded in lieu of the Memory of the Redemption out of *Egypt*, a much greater Remembrance, even the universal Redemption of the World by Christ our Passover, the Lamb of God slain for us; and a much greater Thanksgiving took place of that for Bread and Wine; even for the Son of God giving himself to be the Bread of the World, the true Bread that came down from Heaven, giving Life eternal to the World.

AFTER the Disposition of the external Signs upon the Table, the next in order is, the appropriating them to the holy and solemn Use which Christ has commanded, usually called *Consecration*; not as if any Alteration passed upon the Elements; for what was Bread and Wine before, is the self same still, in its Nature and Constitution, though appropriated from common, to a spiritual Use. The Remainder lies upon every Communicant, to make it that religious and beneficial Sacrament, Eucharist, and Communion it ought to be. And every one may communicate with their Spirit, and with their Understanding also, by bringing the Thing signify'd to the present external Signs; which is done by a pious Remembrance, and Consideration of the Ends for which the receiving the Lord's Supper was ordained; briefly comprised by our Lord himself in that plainly obliging, and no less advantageous Command, *do this in Remembrance of me.*

SHOULD it be asked *how*, and *where* is the Body and Blood of Christ *present*, after the solemn appropriating a certain Quantity of the

Elements to the Use of remembering? The Answer is, in the Receiver's *Thoughts* and *Remembrance*. How can a *Memorial* be any where else? And there it is, or may be, as *verily* and *indeed* taken and received in the faithful Remembrance, as such a past important Transaction concerning the absent Body and Blood of Christ crucify'd, can be in the Mind of him, or her, who is devoutly commemorating, that it was once offered up in Sacrifice; and for whom; and for what End. This plain Observation is abundantly sufficient to rectify the many Mistakes concerning that *Presence*; seeing it is neither *in*, nor *under*, nor *with* those Elements at all; nor does there any *real Presence*, excepting that of Bread and Wine, enter into the Bread and Wine, unless *Thought* and *Recollection* of Mind can be a real Presence. 'Tis true, the *Thoughts* or *Ideas* making up collectively the Memorial of Christ crucify'd, is present to the Mind, and that makes his absent Body no otherwise present, than to the Intents and Purposes of thinking and reflecting. If that can create a *real Presence* of any Sort, then may every other absent Body thought of by *Occasion* of something present, *appointed* to be the Sign, Memorial, or Occasion of thinking thereon, be as well present *in*, *under*, or *with* that Sign or Occasion of thinking; as the Body and Blood of Christ, the Thing signify'd, can be believed to be with the Bread and Wine, the Sign, or the Thing signifying in the Lord's Supper. To talk seriously of any other *real Presence*, (if that which is *mental* may be called so) or of a Body being present after the Manner of a Spirit, is to study to make that difficult and unintelligible, which Christ, and the Nature of Things, have made very plain: For
not

not the Bread and Wine, but our Thoughts taking an Occasion from those appointed Signs and external Actions of breaking and pouring out, of eating and drinking, to reflect seriously and thankfully upon the Death of Christ, the new Covenant in his Blood for Remission of Sins, Access, and Acceptance with God, and eternal Life; and to comply in earnest with all the Conditions on our Part, for obtaining the Benefits and securing the Blessings; our Thoughts, I say, substitute the Notion of Presence, which, being no more than *notional* and *mental*, is consequently opposite to *real* Presence: Not the Bread and Wine as such, but the raised Remembrance and religious Thinking, is that which works upon the Mind, and renders the Lord's Supper the most religious and devout Solemnity to us.

EITHER such as may be called a SACRAMENT; as we usually take Occasion thence to recognize, on our Part, the *Fidelity* stipulated in the new Covenant, and amend the Obedience of our Lives, which was before devoted and engag'd in Baptism, solemnly offering up ourselves, Souls and Bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto God. Submitting ourselves wholly to his holy Will and Pleasure, and studying to serve him in true Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life. And this agrees with the Account *Pliny* transmitted to *Trajan* the Emperor, of the Christians in his time; *That they were wont upon a stated Day, to meet together early in the Morning, and bind themselves by a Sacrament not to commit Theft, &c.*

OR an EUCHARIST; with respect to the *Thanksgiving* Part, consisting of solemn Oblation, of most humble and hearty Thanks to Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his tender Mercy did give his only Son Jesus Christ, to suffer Death upon the Cross for our Redemption; of all Times, and above all Places, it is then, and there very meet, right, and our bounden Duty to give *Thanks*.

OR the COMMUNION of the Body and Blood of Christ, as *St. Paul* has assign'd the Uses, *1 Cor. x. viz.* 1. For maintaining Christian Charity in *giving, forgiving, and general interceding*, among Christians, who are mystically one in Body, and all Fellow-Members of that one Body, whereof Christ is Head. The Mind is then aptly impress'd with a corresponding Disposition and Sympathy of mental Membership and *Communion of Saints*, by the bodily Concurrence of Christian People communicating of the signified Body. Love to Enemies is particularly signified and stamp'd upon the Mind, by representing the most bounteous superlative Example of it, in that, while we were yet Enemies, he died for us. And what can better inspire the Communicant with universal Benevolence and Reconciliation, than his receiving the Pledges of the like Love of God, and of our Master and only Saviour, thus dying for all Men? 2. For preserving Christians from the Idolatry of communicating in any Service to, or worship of any other Mediator for Acceptance with God, but the *one Lord Christ*. To whom they must all inviolably adhere,

here, as the sole Master and Mediator of the true Religion, and Worship of God.

AND if there is but that one Mediator and Advocate with God, who lives for ever, and for all Intents and Purposes, to make Intercession *himself* for us, and represent and plead the *once* offering of Himself for us; not only the Doctrine of *Saints* and *Angels* interceding, is absurd; but that Notion lately espoused by *some* Protestants, *viz.* of the *Priest* or Minister *representing* the Sacrifice of his Son to God, and *pleading* that Oblation with him for the Sins of the Congregation, must be erroneous likewise; because it is a plain *sharing with*, and encroaching upon Christ's Office at the right Hand of God. For how easily, upon Occasion, might this Doctrine in its Consequences, be reconciled to the Popish *renewing* and *repeating* that Sacrifice, which was once made? It seems therefore not so true, nor so proper an Expression of the Lord's Supper to call it a *commemorative Sacrifice*, as *some* have used, or rather misused that Expression of the antient Fathers; who would probably have omitted it, could they have foreseen the ill Construction Posterity have put upon their *devout Metaphors*.

BUT in our Churches Office, instead of *offering* the Body of Christ, *real*, or *mystical*, for a Propitiation to God, there is *only offer'd* to Him, by the officiating Minister and Congregation, first *Prayers* and *Supplications* for all Men, *Alms* and *Oblations* for the Poor, *Prayers* over the Bread and Wine, and *Praises* commemorative of the full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, Satisfaction

Satisfaction (*once offered*) for the Sins of the whole World. *Secondly*, Vows and Resolutions for holy Obedience, *ourselves, our Souls and Bodies to be a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice*. Such Sacrifice of ourselves, in devout Memorial of his, most fitly *shews forth the Lord's Death 'till his coming again*, before God and Man; the new Covenant betwixt God and Man seal'd by the *Blood* of the Mediator, being then and there with great Truth commemorated, as too much neglected by us, and then and there with equal Necessity resolved to be better observ'd. But a *commemorative Sacrifice*, is a very different Idea, with some Moderns, from the Commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ.

THE commanded Virtue of the instituted Sign is, to create an Opportunity, and impress a solemn Memorandum of what Christ would have in that manner remember'd; the Virtue and Office of a Receiver of that Sign, must therefore be to receive it according to the Institution; remembring that it is his Business and Devotion, upon that sacred Occasion, to join the Sign and the Thing signified together, and bring the End to the Participation, the Death of our Redeemer, and the Sacrifice of his precious Blood, his Body broken, and his Blood pour'd out, and make it *mentally* present upon the Table, in the View of our Mind, *looking upon him whom we have pierced*, in his most serious and pious Reflections upon the same; as ever he desires to communicate as Christ would have him, and make a Conscience of *doing it in Remembrance of him*.

As

As the Cup is called by the Institutor, my Blood of the *new Covenant*, that necessarily and particularly brings to Remembrance our Knowledge of *that Covenant*, with our Obligations to, Deviation from, and Privileges in observing as we ought, and the ill Consequences of contaminating it with Sin and Disobedience, which to be guilty of by wilful Apostacy, is *counting the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing*, and a tearing off the *Seal*, viz. the *Lord knoweth* or approveth *who are his*; but how know or how approve, but by the Counterpart, *every one that nameth the Name of Christ* (and it is hard to remember him without his Name) *let him depart from all Iniquity?*

FOR the Thoughts of that Covenant immediately and unavoidably bring into solemn Recollection, the *Mediator* of it; which includes not only Lord and Master, but something more, viz. all the unspeakable Kindnesses design'd by his *Death*, to our Souls and Bodies. And as we ought more especially to muse and meditate, and be grateful for Kindnesses at this time of *Eucharist* and Thanksgiving, what can be greater in all the World, than his dying upon the Cross for the Salvation of both, the Remission of Sin, the Resurrection of the Body, and Life everlasting. *Ec.*? And if we have any Conscience of that Covenant, enter'd into by Baptism, or any Value for the *Mediator* of it, or his dying Command, we must remember our Sins with a forsaking Hatred, since that was the grand Benefit to usward, *to save his People from their Sins, and redeem us from all Iniquity, that we become zealous of good Works.* In
 2 order

order to which, it previously promotes an Enquiry, and enjoins an Examination, how much, and in what Particulars we have deviated from the holy Profession we undertook at Baptism; whether we are in the Faith; and in the due and becoming Course of Obedience, which inseparably belongs to it; and whether the Ends of Christ's Institution, are the Ends, and no other, that brings us to that holy Sacrament.

AND what ought, or should be, the Consequence of such a Remembrance to any People, but to abhor and forsake those Sins more and more, which God has so severely forbidden, yet at so great a Cost is ready to forgive! And in that holy Purpose of sincere Endeavour, spiritually drink of that desirable Spring of Comfort to a guilty Conscience, the Remission of Sins, and the joyful Sense of Friendship with God, upon the Condition of future Obedience; sufficient to kindle a Flame of Love and Thanksgiving in every Breast. Then *the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for us* (as the external Sign is bodily taken and eaten) will be thoughtfully taken and spiritually eaten in Remembrance of his dying for us, and fed on in our Heart by Faith with Thanksgiving; and as the Body and Soul of the Just, who live by this Faith, will be preserv'd unto everlasting Life: Then will the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Blood of the new Covenant, be drank in our Thoughts, when the Remembrance of the Ends and Conditions for which it was shed, is the Guest there: And thus will our Souls be strengthened and refresh'd by the Body and Blood of Christ, if we eat and drink as verily with our feeding imbibing Faith, as with our Mouth.

THE Church of England Office calls the Bread and Wine *holy Mysteries*, in that scriptural Sense of Mystery, which imports a *Symbol*¹; and puts all the Good and *Effect* of those holy Mysteries into the Peoples own Power, notwithstanding the *Unworthiness* (if such a Thing should ever happen) of the officiating *Minister*².

AND this way of measuring by the Ends, will help us to a true Judgment, what is St. Paul's *unworthy* receiving the Lord's Supper, and what on the contrary is worthy receiving: For this is judging by the same Standard and Measure the Apostle himself appeal'd to. In order to shame and convince the *Corinthians* of their unworthy receiving it through the Disorders crept in among them, he recalls them to the original Institution, and to the Ends set forth by Christ, as he receiv'd them from him, which he recites particularly³; and then immediately forms his Argument, and subjoins, *wherefore whosoever shall eat this Bread or drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of our Lord; i. e.* whoever in partaking that Supper, omits the Ends which Christ himself has annex'd thereto, as did some of the *Corinthians*, that Person is to be accounted an unworthy Guest at that Supper, being guilty of a gross Misapplication concerning the Body and Blood of Christ, externally represented there by the Signs of Bread and Wine. For not to remember those Ends, or not devoutly to reflect upon the Death and Passion of Christ, and not to represent to ourselves and to one another, the Love of God in that Sacrament,

¹ *Eph.* v. 32.

² See xxvi. Article of the same Church.

³ *1 Cor.* xi. 17, &c.

ment, was not to eat the Lord's Supper but prophane it; and to be as incogitant of what they were about, as if they were at their *own ordinary* Supper; not discerning the Lord's Body, or not discriminating the Bread and Wine, which were the Signs, from other Bread and Wine, which is common Victuals.

HE that comes to that Supper knowing the Bread and Wine to be purposely set apart for commemorating the Death of Christ, yet eats and drinks those Symbols of Remembrance, without applying them to the Ends of Remembrance, he eats and drinks nothing but *mere* Bread and Wine, he unseasonably eats, and unthinkingly drinks no Symbols, he discerns not the Lord's Body; he is therefore guilty of not considering the Thing signified, the Body and Blood of Christ. And consequently, seeing those Symbols (as he very well knew) were purposely to be eaten and drank, for considering and discerning the Lord's Body, he eats and drinks his own Condemnation, *i. e.* that which serves to reproach and condemn him, as well as expose himself to the Provocation and Judgment of the Lord of that Supper, for not using such Symbols, at such a time, answerably to his positive Appointment and Memorial of himself: And for want of *judging* and *examining* himself, and his Intentions of communicating by the End, *i. e.* the discerning, discriminating, and remembering the Lord's Body broken, and Blood of the new Covenant shed, which are so notoriously the Design of that Supper; for which horrid Prostitution of the Knowledge and Conscience of what the Apostle had before deliver'd to them, at so sacred a Solemnity, and for intemperate Disorders, and parting of

Tables, and dividing Communion even under the same Roof, and for their unchristian Partiality and unseasonable Kind of Excommunication of their Poor Brethren (the most absurd Behaviour certainly at the united Commemoration of a Saviour dying for the Salvation of all Men, Poor as well as Rich): The Lord of that undiscern'd Body, and abused Supper, judg'd or punish'd the Irreverence of some with bodily Affliction, that others might be chasten'd into Amendment; some with Death: *For this Cause many are sick and weakly among you, and many sleep.*

AND as this gives a true Judgment concerning *unworthy* receiving, so does it of the Apostle's short, effectual Rule of *examining ourselves* previously, in order to prevent it in every Communicant ever after, (seeing we are free from the open Disorders and Indecencies among the *Corinthians*) which is again according to his Appeal in the Matter, *viz.* to make the *End* of the Institution fixed by *Christ* himself, the perpetual Standard for weighing and examining all our Comportment, Intention and Purposes in Reference to that Duty. Whether we resolve then to be devoutly mindful and observant of what the Lord of that Supper lays a double Charge on us, at that Time, to mind and bear in particular Remembrance; to lift up our Hearts, to lift them up to that Lord who taketh away the Sins of the World, in the most grateful Remembrance, constraining and producing all Obedience, for his inestimable Kindnesses; and whether we will reform our Lives, conform our Minds and Actions to the Terms of the new Covenant in his Blood; and regulate our Hopes of Remission of past Sins; of readier Acceptance and joyful Access unto God;

God ; of eternal Life ; and of all other Benefits of his Passion, by that solemn *shewing forth the Lord's Death*. That Kind of Remembrance is the perpetual Standard and Regulation for preventing *Schisms* and *Heresies* in reference to this Solemnity. But, as the *Apostle* observes in the same *chap.* *They must needs be*, as long as there are Passions and Corruptions in Men, and the Providence of God permits them to have their corrupt Effects ; the providential Touchstone and *Event* of it will be, or ought to be, that *they who are approved of the Lord*, by adhering to the *Ends* of *his own* Institution, and preserving that *Sort* of Remembrance, *may be made manifest*, by that Discrimination, and that invariable Rule of right receiving according to Christ's own Institution.

Was there a *physical* Virtue, or *inseparable* inward and spiritual Grace communicated to the consecrated Elements for imparting to Communicants the blessed Effects of the Sacrifice of Christ ; or, which is the same Thing, could the *opus operatum* of corporeal eating and drinking¹, answer the *End* of remembering his Death ; Children, Ideots, or the most profligate Sinners, (intending still to be such) who never think at all of the Matter, would be worthy Receivers, and there could be no such Thing as unworthy receiving.

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¹ The *Papists* maintain'd that Grace was *ipso facto* conferr'd with the outward Symbols, and the People *justified* merely by the *Work* of receiving those Externals, by complying with those *sacramental* Works: The *Protestants* asserted on the contrary, That the spiritual Efficacy depended chiefly on the internal Part, the Application of the Mind by *Faith*. Thence commenc'd the Controversy between *them*, whether *Justification* was by *Works* or *Faith* ; which receiv'd different Turns afterwards.

ceiving. But since they operate *interpretatively*, to our most serious Reflexion, as foodful Signs and Monuments, for raising our Thoughts to and recollecting them upon the Thing signified, *Christ dying for our Sins*, and the great Love of God in that Dispensation of a *Mediator*: Seeing the Lord's Supper works upon the inward thinking Man in this *rational, moral* Way, (upon which may be expected the fulfilling of Grace and spiritual Benediction, in virtue of *Prayers* for the Gifts of the Spirit, at that Time, used; Prayer in *Christ's Name*, being the Key of Heaven for *that* Conveyance and Supply of our Needs engag'd at our Entrance into the new Covenant, at Baptism) to the perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord, as the Communicant in a lively Faith in God's Mercy, and being in perfect Charity with all Men, reflects upon *that Method* of God's pardoning Sin; as it is in itself, the greatest and most affecting Argument of his Love in Christ, that can possibly be laid before the Mind of Man, at a solemn time of reflecting, for winning his reciprocal Love, and securing his bounden Obedience.

THUS one Sacrament is the solemn Rite of initiating into the *new Covenant* with all its Privileges, Conditions, and Obligations; the other for solemnly and frequently *recognizing* and *remembering* it, in the Grounds thereof, the *Death* of the Mediator; and as both these Institutions and Solemnities, are adapted to operate in us symbolically and affectingly, thoughtfully and morally, the Design of the Gospel, *i. e.* sober, righteous, and godly Living, the Religion of the End, and the natural Religion of the Means, Repentance and Prayer. And if the Grace of God,

God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, appears unto all Men, to act thus spiritually, and yet most certainly in the moral Tendency of the two Sacraments; by solemnly first entering, and afterwards as often as it loosens, riveting and fixing the Gospel new Testament, or new Covenant upon Christians, call'd the Ministration of the *Spirit*, and the Law of the Spirit of Life, for giving Life and Efficacy to the otherwise expiring natural Religion both of the End, and of the Means: How useful, excellent, and wise is the Institution of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper? How *generally* necessary to Salvation? How absurd the Neglect and Contempt of Scoffers?





C H A P. VI.

The great Benefit and Service of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, in carrying on the MEANS, and END of natural Religion; in Answer to the shameful Misrepresentations of the Deists.

I N the two preceding *Chapters*, I have mentioned several godly Uses and Advantages arising out of the Institution and Design of these *Positive* Parts of Christianity, as morally subservient for undertaking, and compleating our religious Engagements, sufficient to recommend them to the Practice of all, who would fulfil all Righteousness. Did nothing appear but the bare positive Command, and nothing in the Command but what is worthy of God, that is sufficient Argument for Obedience; inasmuch as Disobedience must necessarily be a moral Transgression of the Duty and Relation we stand in to God; but being sure of the Command, we may be all sure, there are abundant good Reasons for our Compliance, though we could not deduce them all.

A positive Command from Heaven to a *particular* Person may very well be designed, as a Tryal, to distinguish him eminently from the rest

rest of the Community. But when a *positive* Injunction is laid upon the *whole* Community, and all are obliged to Obedience, that End can't be proposed. Therefore, as I observed before from *Puffend.* (a Book cited by our Author, and his Profession obliged him to be well versed in it) that though a positive Law flows from the sole Pleasure of the Lawgiver, yet *these Laws ought likewise to have their Reason, and their Uses; in Reference to that particular Society for which they were enacted.*

WOULD it not, therefore, better have become our Author, and every other Deist, to have enquired into the Reason, and Uses of such plain peremptory Commands, than to have slighted, traduced, and condemn'd them in the gross, and in such abusive Characters as they endeavour to expose them under? Is there not the greatest Reason, are there not the best of Uses in these two external Ordinances? If it is plain that the Christian Religion, with all its Comforts, is best begun and entered upon by *personal Covenant*, or Stipulation for that Covenant afterwards; nothing can be plainer, than that it must be carry'd on by the same Methods by which it began, *i. e.* a solemn Recollection and Remembrance of that Covenant, and the Mediator of it, in the Lord's Supper, as Occasion requires. What Ground is there for Exception? If, as they are set forth in Scripture, our Lord purposely instituted them, as being positively serviceable for attaching us the more firmly to himself, as *Mediator* of that Covenant, and so become the most potent Means for promoting Christian Holiness, or moral Righteousness. The learned Dr. *Waterland* has observed very rightly, ' That many of the Scripture-Duties, ' which

* which we have otherwise no Knowledge of, are
 * yet justly referr'd to the Law of Nature;
 * since Scripture hath discover'd what Founda-
 * tion they have in the Nature and Truth of
 * Things.' Though these positive Institutions
 of our Lord have the Superscription of his Au-
 thority, who commanded them; yet they were
 not commanded for commanding sake, but for
 the Use and Benefit of solemnly undertaking and
 improving in the natural Religion of the *End*,
 and of the *Means*, through the due Use of those
 divine Ordinances.

THEY were not ordained merely for their
 own sake; but in order to an End, to make us
 more effectually religious, by applying to new
 and more powerful Methods for invigorating,
 and perfecting the *natural Means*, for carrying
 on the Ends of natural Religion, by a moral Ope-
 ration of our own perceiving; provided we are
 not wanting, in applying our moral Powers,
 which, in that Case, by Virtue of our own wise
choosing such an Engagement, and with that, all
 the appertaining Assistances, makes that Yoke
 easy, that would otherwise be a Burthen under a
 previous Obligation of *another's* imposing. Tho'
 the Duties we engage in, don't arise merely from
 the Vows and Promises of keeping Covenant;
 but were obligatory before: Still to make them
 more so, we wisely and voluntarily become a
Party in them, bind them with a twofold Cord
 of Conscience, double their Force with Discre-
 tion, and with the Applause of our own Reason,
 superadd new Reasons for the better Performance
 of that, whereon our everlasting Happiness is
 dependant. Was the Performance before En-
 gagement

¹ *Nature, Obligation and Efficacy of the Christian Sacra-
 ment, pag. 9.*

gagement unlawful, the superadded Engagement could not make it valid, or denominate its Duty ; but being previously obligatory, becomes afterwards double Duty, attended in its Consequence with unspeakably more than double Happiness hereafter.

WHOEVER therefore is truly devoted to the End, will of Course be so to the best Means for obtaining it. How particularly expedient are they for furthering *Repentance* and *Prayer*, the two natural Means, which, as I shewed before under those Heads, were decay'd and dormant, languish'd and dispirited, for carrying on the Ends of the Religion of Nature ? Remission of Sins, and Assurance of the Acceptableness of our Addresses to God in the Method laid before us in the Revelation of his Son *Jesus Christ*, which bring Comfort and Consolation to Repentance, and Wings to our Prayers ; are represented not only in Words, but in sensible *Signs* and *Symbols* more significative and stronger than Words ; that the *whole* Man might be captivated and taken in more effectually and *entirely*, for acquitting himself towards the Things signify'd, his own greatest Advantage. The Objection of our Author ^a against Symbols in Religion, viz. because they are apt to affect the generality more powerfully than Words, is the very Reason of the Divine Appointment in this important Case, especially since they are very few and simple, and so effectually guarded from Superstition, and Mistake.

IN *Baptism*, the sprinkling or cleansing the Flesh by Water (and Water is a Symbol of Purification

fication among all Nations) is a *Tally*, to which the cleansing of the Spirit or Conscience from Sin by the Blood of Christ, and renewal of the Holy Ghost, answers; as does the dying to Sin, and rising to newness of Life, to our Burial and Resurrection with him in Baptism; which enters us with a joyful Prospect into the meliorating cleansing State of Repentance; and in the Adoption of Sons introduces our After-Prayers to the Throne of Grace of our Almighty, and most merciful *Father*: Being exhorted to *draw near* to him in our Devotions *with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water.* In the Primitive Church, none were suffered to use the Prayer *OUR FATHER, &c.* before they were baptized, *i. e. adopted* by the new Covenant: So that Baptism might be called the Sacrament of *Prayer*, as it often was the Sacrament of *Repentance*, and the Sacrament of *Faith*. The *saving Part* of Baptism, according to the Apostle, is the *Answer* or Stipulation of a good Conscience towards God, performing its superinduc'd Covenant and Engagement contracted in Christ the Mediator of that new and better Covenant, by *keeping that Baptism pure and undefiled, the remaining Part of Life*; in Token of which new, covenanted, pure State, the Antients invested the baptized with *white Garments*, for some Time after it. *Socrates* argues a strict Obedience to the Laws from a *tacit Promise, Treaty, and Covenant*, every Subject is supposed to have enter'd into in Virtue of the Protection and Benefit he receives from the Laws. How much stronger is such an Argument when it is corroborated upon all Christians towards their heavenly

* See *Plato's Crito*; or, *what we ought to do.*

venly Governor; by *express* Vow and Promise, open Covenant and Engagement?

BESIDES, an Engagement or Relation of *our own* contracting from *Choice*, or Liking, or Sense of Gratitude, has an Influence, Alacrity, and Endearment in it superior to a natural Relation, that we have no Hand in; as the Love of a Friend is dearer, more forcible than that of a Brother: And because Friendship must be mutual to make it lasting, and some Commerce of Secrets must pass, *Jesus* condescends to call Friend *first*; to communicate the most concerning Secrets, and lay down his Life for his Friend, for every one of us: Provided we do whatsoever he commands us; and one of his Commandments is, Ye believe in God, *believe also in me*. There are many Things for refreshing Belief in God; whilst the *two Sacraments* are appointed for engrafting, and recognizing Belief in *Christ* the Mediator.

AND because both Repentance, and Prayer, and Resolution of Obedience will often stand in need of *Repair*, by Reason of the Frailty of our Nature lapsing into former Sins, and whenever the Return is to bad, the next Propension is to worse, till better Repentance, Prayer, and Resolution get the perfect Mastery of our Sins; the *Lord's Supper* is ordained for solemnly strengthening, and fortifying their several renew'd Efforts for a good Life. To live afterwards with all the Fidelity due to our renew'd Vows and Promises, and with that Faith and Attachment to our Lord and Master, wherein we recognize ourselves engaged to follow him, by recollecting in a more solemn Manner than usual, and impressing the Mind the more deeply with the condition'd Promises

Promises and Privileges, indispensable Obligations and Engagements embraced and undertaken in our Covenant at Baptism ; and so apply'd, makes that a *Sacrament*, as well as Baptism : And religiously take and consecrate the Occasion, which was purposely given by the Author of our Religion, from that impressive Memorial of the *Blood of the new Covenant*, in drinking the Cup ; to amend all our Deviations, and become more stedfast in that Covenant, cleaving to the Lord, *Mediator* of it, as the Patron of our Hopes, and the Pattern of our Obedience ; sacrificing our Lusts, and crucifying all irregular Affections in particular, at that solemn Memorial of his Crucifixion.

THE breaking the Bread, and pouring out the Wine, eating and drinking in Remembrance of our Redeemer, exhibits our Life spared, and his offer'd up a Propitiation for our Sins : And thus shewing forth the Death of the Mediator as the *Means* of our Redemption, in the Consideration what we are redeemed *from*, and *to what* ; and by *whom* ; must improve the moral Virtue of *Gratitude* in us ; *Qui meminit sine impendio gratus est.* Sen. Who can then and there be so ungrateful as not to remember him ; who, besides past Kindness, forgets not to pity our Infirmities, to intercede with our heavenly Father for our Offences, and crown our Repentance and Prayer with desired Success ? Who is then actually making us, that Part of us, our Faith and Trust, doing that in Remembrance of him in Obedience to his Commandment, Partakers of his Intercession and all the blessed Fruits of it. Who can keep back his Reason, who can forbid his Senses then *tasting* and *seeing* how gracious the Lord is, and

and there receiving outward Pledges of spiritual, celestial, and eternal Gifts, from remembring, from being devoted, from being faithful to such a Lord? Or from reflecting, and comforting himself, how blessed is the Man, who thus trusteth in, taking the *Cup of Salvation*, and calling upon the Name of the Lord? Who thus calling, is the more intent upon serving him, by calling up the soft Force of irresistible Obligations to him.

SUCH Goodness of God to us must not only lead us to Repentance, but lead Repentance on to all the Fruits worthy of it; the Redemption of the Sinner, and the Remission of Sins being so plainly ascertain'd before us. And in remembring his Death, we remember also his Resurrection and Ascension, and his sitting at the Right-Hand of God, the Mediator of Intercession, as well as Redemption for us, the everliving, all potent Advocate for chearing our drooping Prayers, and seconding and succeeding our Requests. Thus we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, *i. e.* there is a constant renewable Communication, this Way, between God and us; through him the Mediator and Center of perfect Friendship and Reconciliation, so far as to be an Habitation of God through the Spirit.

CERTAIN it is in the Nature of Things, that our Lord's Method in first instituting outward and visible Signs for commemorating his Death, and all the Benefits of his Passion, and then *positively commanding* our Application to them for that Purpose, affords a double Occasion both to the Senses, and to the Understanding (the Understanding of the compounded Constitution of Man being made to receive the most lively and affecting

affecting Ideas from the Senses) of pausing seriously, and pondering devoutly, what should be the Import of that Commandment! who gave it, with Respect to the Dignity of his Person, and the Obligation conferred upon us; and for what End and Purpose; and approach it as a solemn awful Opportunity of reflecting, and feeding in the Heart, by Faith, with Thanksgiving. And such a *Thanksgiving*, at such a Time, is the most efficacious Prayer to God for every Thing we want; *efficacissimum genus est rogandi, gratias agere*, Plin. Pan. Such a Thanksgiving certainly is not only seasonable, and without Reproof, but impregnated with all Blessings.

AND is not that *prepared* Season of unspeakably more Use and Benefit to his Followers, than any loose, undetermin'd Opportunity of their own chusing? who for want of such an Appointment from *Christ* himself, in the particular Externals of his own chusing, would have been left in so many different Minds, and a general Disregard of any solemn Method for such an important Memorial; and, what through the Multiplicity of worldly Affairs, the Tumults of Passion, the Indolence of most to serious thinking, and the Backwardness of all in considering spiritual Things, would hardly ever otherwise be brought to comport themselves with proper Seriousness and heavenly-Mindedness to the Divine Mercy, and the salutary Things signify'd thereby.

How contrary therefore to Truth, and to the Nature of Things, and to common Decency, does our Author in the Airs of Triumph declaim against these Positives, as they are commonly called,

called, of Christianity: For he discards, and arraigns them in the Lump, with abundance of opprobrious Names, without ever assigning one Reason or Argument against them in particular: Which is so much the more disingenuous and unfair in a Champion-Writer, because he knew *these*, with *Faith* in a *Mediator*, were commanded in *particular*; whereas other Rituals and Externals of Divine Service, wherein he indiscriminately and injudiciously includes the other three, are commanded only in general. But, by taking that Method, he thought he could not fail of his Aim, that his Readers could not miss of applying and pointing in particular, the Virulence of his general Satire against those particular Objects of his Displeasure.

FAITH in a Mediator will be considered in its proper Place. I am now concerned for the other two. He hints at Baptism once², and makes it as ridiculous, and absurd a Ceremony, as *paring of Nails*. He hints likewise at the other; 'Supposing, says he, such symbolical Representations might be occasionally used, (meaning those of the Lord's Supper, from the Words preceding) is it not incumbent upon the Parties

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concerned

¹ All other *Positive* Laws, Divine or Human, (the Law of the *Passover* excepted, and other such-like commemorative Laws) have Respect not to what is past, but set Bounds, and make Provision against what is future: But these are of that peculiar Nature, as to have Regard to what is past, as well as what is future; and after Publication, so far partake of a natural Law, as to be founded in Gratitude for past Mercies, in order to reclaim a bad Conversation. They animate Repentance and Prayer; which jointly and severally respect what is past, as well as what is to come; to give us the Knowledge of ourselves, what manner of Persons we should not be, as well as what we ought to be.

² Pag. 111, 112.

‘concerned to appoint, alter, and vary them as
 ‘Occasion requires’¹? If he means only altering
 and varying from the superstitious and idolatrous
 Corruptions introduced by the Church of *Rome*,
 he has the Concurrence of all Protestants: But if
 he intends Alterations and Variations from the
 original Rule, it can’t be granted. He had said
 before², ‘That in all Matters of a mutable Na-
 ‘ture (and he supposes all *Peculiar*s of Revelation
 to be such, in Contradistinction to moral Things)
 ‘which can only be consider’d as Means, he
 ‘[God] obliges Men to act according as they
 ‘judge most proper for bringing about those
 ‘[moral] Ends’: But, I hope, not to leave
 them at Liberty to use them, or not use them;
 to alter, and vary them at Pleasure.

He often involves them in the Censure of his
indifferent Things; from which he would have
 the Needlessness of them inferred. But though
 the external Signs were indifferent before; I
 hope, the interposing Command of our Lord is
 sufficient to deprive Men of their Liberty, as to
 the *Indifference* of using, or not using them after-
 wards. He says³, ‘All Legislators punish the
 ‘Breach of the Religion of Nature, being for the
 ‘good of Society; whereas no Man rejects any
 ‘*positive* Institution himself, but is willing that
 ‘all others should do so to.’ This is talking and
 distinguishing like the most ignorant *Civilian* that
 ever deviated out of his Profession. For almost
 every *Civil Law* Book might have instructed him
 better, that the Number of *positive* Laws (infinite
 to reckon up) have arose, and continually will
 arise, either by Alteration of old ones, or Sub-
 stitution of new ones, out of two Causes, which
 perpetually

¹ Pag. 153. ² Pag. 91. ³ Pag. 54.

perpetually mixes with human Society: 1. The Necessity of regulating, by their Help, the Difficulties and Inconveniencies that arise, upon Variety of changing Circumstances, in the Application of natural Laws, such as cannot be provided for but by *Positive* Laws, there being no Provision or Regulation concerning them in the natural Laws themselves. 2. The second Cause or Source of those *Positive* Laws, is the variable Introduction of certain Usages or Customs (general, or particular) esteem'd useful to Society. Now the natural immutable Laws, and the better Observance of them, are included and provided for, in their changeable various Circumstances, by these *positive* Laws; one Part of what they enjoin being a natural Right or Duty, whilst the other Part is of a *positive* Nature. And if the Excellency of those Laws will ever consist in the Influence and Tendency they have in better governing and well ordering the Society, which receive them for Laws, and ought to put them in due Practice: How admirably excellent are the three *Positives* of Christianity, as they are founded upon the natural Law of Gratitude, and keeping Engagement, and making Provision for our frail guilty Condition in this World, to the Intent of fulfilling and observing all the other natural immutable Laws to the greatest Perfection we are able?

BUT he could not be ignorant, that no human Legislator punishes for many of the Breaches of the Law of Nature; not for Neglect of Benevolence, (which is his grand Law of all) provided it extends not to actual Injury, which is the only Object of the Punishments of human Laws. As to the latter Part, we may readily believe both

his Sincerity and Zeal likewise in rejecting for himself, and inducing others to reject the positive Institutions of Christianity. It would be injurious to his Memory, to imagine, that the Reasons of his Conduct were drawn from another World; but if he grounded his Contempt, upon the Reason he intimates, *viz.* their being no Ways conducive to the good of Society, he is as far distant from the Truth, as he was from the Observation of such Institutions.

FOR the very End and Design of them is to promote Piety, Righteousness, and Sobriety to the highest Pitch; and Piety derives a Blessing, and Righteousness exalteth a Nation, and Sobriety makes the most useful, diligent Subjects. Besides, a due Compliance with them lays the only sure Foundation for the most extensive Practice of Benevolence and Beneficence, which renders Society happy to Perfection. As our Obligations to Benevolence are drawn from the Law of Nature, they are a Theory of the Mind, not perceived by all, and consequently not productive of general Practice; but as it is learn'd and imparted in the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, it appears and distinguishes itself, indeed, in a human Shape, upon Earth.

WHAT makes for the greatest good of every Individual, must be for the greatest good of Society also: But what greater good can derive to particular Persons from these Institutions, than, by their Means, to live in Innocence, and general Love, and in the Sense of God's Favour, and in the Joy of Mind, and Peace of Conscience, that he is our Friend; that makes us love him, and that makes us keep his Commandments? *Justin Martyr,*

Martyr, in his primitive Account of the *Lord's Supper*, accordingly says, that the departing Resolution and consequent Practice was mutually, and almost always, to remind one another of these Things¹, i. e. such practical Conclusions and Emendation of Manners, suitable to his Commandments, which naturally flowed from commemorating their Lord in that holy Sacrament². As Morality is the Tie and Happiness of Society, how dear to every Man should be the Means which bind that Tie the faster upon every Man's Mind, as often as it grows loose? And blessed are they who hunger and thirst after such Means of Righteousness, for eating and drinking they shall be satisfy'd.

THAT our Author, therefore, pick'd a needless Quarrel with these Means, is a shrewd Evidence that he was not at Bottom, a true Friend to his own Law of Nature; because, if he had, he had certainly been better reconciled to these best of Means for obeying it, to the greatest Perfection that human Nature is now capable of; especially after natural Means failed of effecting it, as I have already observed.

As to what he says of the Hurt and Prejudice occasionally done to Society and particular Per-

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¹ Ἡμεῖς δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα λυσιπὼν δεῖ τέτων ἀλλήλους ἀναμνησκομέν. *Apol.* 11, pag. 98, in Obedience to the Command, εἰς τὴν ἀνάμνησιν μου.

² *Euseb. Chronicon. præterea* (speaking of *Pliny's* famous Representation to *Trajan*, of the Christians singing an Hymn to Christ before Day at their *Eucharist*) *ad confæderandam disciplinam vetari ab eis homicidia, furta, adulteria, latrocinia, & his similia*, i. e. they join'd in Remembrance of their Covenant, and confederate Discipline at that Solemnity, not to commit Murder, Adultery, Theft, or any such Crimes.

sons from these Means, it proves no more than the Abuse which the best of Things are liable to, and which is no Manner of Argument against repeating the due Use of them. All that he harangues upon of the Want of Charity from the persecuting Effects of it, *pag. 45, &c. 84, &c. 123, &c.* with many other Deviations from true Religion; they lie at the Door of the Church of *Rome*: Let them answer to God and Man for it, True Christianity and his own Country are unconcerned in any of his Imputations. Now if these holy Means have a Connection with, and the revealed Commands from Heaven have a manifest Relation to the GOOD OF MEN, then Christianity having these Institutes, and I add *Faith* in the Mediator Jesus Christ for its Foundation, must, by a Test of his own appointing almost every where in his Book, be the *true Religion*, and certainly revealed from Heaven.

ESPECIALLY, if in the next Place, they are promotive also of the HONOUR OF GOD, which is his other Test. Our Author has the Assurance to say, that these appointed Means 'have no Tendency to promote Righteousness, 'Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, and therefore can't make us serviceable to Christ, or acceptable either to God or Man.' He must necessarily include these, by what he says of the Law of Liberty in the preceding Page, which he affirms 'does not consist in a Freedom from 'Things of a moral Nature, for that would be 'perfect Slavery; but from *all* those Things that 'are not of such a Nature.' But can any thing be more manifest, than that these excellent heavenly Means singularly promote the Things *wherein*

wherein the Kingdom of God consists, Righteousness, Peace, [of Conscience, and Peace among Men] and Joy in the Holy Ghost? be that in these Things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God. And is not the Lord's Supper in its Appointment both a *serving of Christ*, and a serving of these Things of his Kingdom?

He makes honouring God and Patriotism, synonymous Terms: Supposing him in the Right in so doing; What does that conclude? Nothing at all against, but altogether in Behalf of the Sacred and most benign Institution of our Lord. For does not that, as oft as we have Recourse to it, more practically and particularly, than his Law of Nature, extinguish arising Enmities, put a Stop to Discord, and kindle up universal Benevolence, which lay under Embers?

He argues the Absurdity of *Positives* in Religion, because, as he imperfectly thinks all such to be grounded upon and supposes a *Change* in God. Again, 'After Men had been for many Ages in a miserable Condition, God thought fit to mend the eternal universal Law of Nature, by adding certain Observances to it, not founded in the Nature of Things.' And elsewhere, 'Whatever Reason tells us is unworthy of having God for its Author, can never belong to true revealed Religion. And whatever is worthy of having God for its Author belongs to natural Religion. It is upon this Plan, says he, I have endeavoured to shew wherein true and genuine Christianity consists.'

IT was our Author's unhappy Way of thinking hastily, and by halves, upon the Nature of Things, that occasioned all that Trouble to himself, in writing his Book, and that Danger and Unsettlement to his Readers in perusing his manifold Errors and Misrepresentations. Had he duly consider'd the Nature of God, or Man, or the Nature of the Relation between them; he had never been so palpably guilty of the Absurdities, he falsely endeavours to throw upon the Christian Revelation.

HE laid it down as a fundamental Truth, and therein I join with him, that every Work which proceeded out of the Hands of God, who is all perfect in Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, must be *perfect in its Kind*. Now, if Man was the Work of his Hands, and was made a moral, accountable Agent, What is the Perfection of a moral Agent *as such*? But to have all his Powers and Faculties adequately adjusted to obey the Will of his Maker without the least Dispute, or Reluctance; and to observe the Law that he gave him, without any Failure or Default; only leaving him to the Liberty and Freedom wherewith he was distinguish'd and invested, to chuse Evil, or Good, Disobedience, or Obedience; for the Use of which Liberty, he was therefore made accountable, as an intelligent Agent, perfectly sensible of his Duty and Obligations how to act. If he had chose the Good of obeying, for his whole Duration, he had acted according to his Nature; but as he chose the Evil of Disobedience, as has been related before, still he acted according to his free primitive Nature; nor could God then have interposed, unless he would have hindered Man

Man from acting accordingly, or ceased himself from governing according to the Nature of Things he had made ; either of which had been inconsistent with his Divine Perfections.

AND if we are as sure that this must have been the *original* Perfection of Man, as we are sure God is perfect: It remains as demonstrably certain, as Matter of Fact, feeling Experience, and the Confession of all Men, can make any thing so, that there must have been a *Change* in Man, or a Fall from a State of Innocence and Integrity, to a State of Sin and Transgression. Since there is no where to be found in our sublunary World, that *first* Perfection of our Nature; but instead of it, in all Nations, and Places, and Persons, a Condition and Constitution of Imbecility and Frailty towards our Duty, and the Law that is given us. There is none that doth Good without some Mixture of Evil, no, not one; nor is there one righteous, free from all Blemish and Defect.

HAD our Author drawn up his Law of Nature into a written System, (and it had very well became him to have built up something uniform, since he was so busy in *pulling down*, p. 381.) he would have found himself, in spite of all his boasted Sufficiency of Reason, wounded with his own Sarcasm, which he throws out so often against the Holy Scripture, *the Letter killeth*: It must have been known to God and his own Conscience, that he was as much wanting in exact Obedience, as many of his Neighbours. Nay, in one or two Places he owns the *Imperfection* of human Nature; pag. 18. ' Thus from the Consideration of our own *Imperfections*, which we
' con-

‘ continually feel; and the Perfections of our
 ‘ Creator, which we constantly find in all his
 ‘ Works, we may arrive at the Knowledge of
 ‘ our Duty.’ *Pag. 21.* ‘ In this Life we are im-
 ‘ perfect ourselves,’ and by owning that, he ac-
 quits God of it, by his own Principle. That
 He is immutable in his own Nature, every body
 grants; at the same time none offer to deny,
 that Man was made *changeable*; and therefore
 was the guilty Cause of that great Alteration, for
 the worse, in his present Nature.

It remains therefore plain to a Demonstration, that the Nature of the *Relation* between
 God as Governor, and Man as Subject, was
 changeable and mutable; and that it was not,
 could not be *immutable*, on Man’s Part. And
 yet upon this false Foundation of its *Immutability*,
 and *that* unchangeable Nature of Things, has he
 confidently grounded his sorry Reasonings, or
 rather poultry Declamations against the Revela-
 tion of the Gospel; and built up the fallacious
 System, the Hay and Stubble of his tottering
 Book; which will remain just as true, and no
 truer, than the Principle he has so laboriously
 built it upon. How justly do those opprobrious
 Reflexions fall upon his own *Work*? ‘ If God
 ‘ requires nothing of his Creatures but what
 ‘ tends to their good, whatever is of this Kind,
 ‘ is a Superstructure that belongs to the Law
 ‘ of Nature; or in other Words, what the Rea-
 ‘ son and Nature of Things themselves plainly
 ‘ point out to us; and for all other Matters
 ‘ which have no such Tendency, you must
 ‘ seek another Foundation, another Nature very
 ‘ different from the Divine, to build your Hay
 ‘ and Stubble upon.’ *Pag. 59.*

WHAT

WHAT he vilifies under these Names are no less than the distinguishing Glories of Christianity above the Light of Nature. But what seems to be the *Foolishness of God* in the Estimate of these opiniative, prejudiced Men, will be found wiser than any of their Conceits; and what they despise as his *Weakness*, will be found stronger than any of their Arguments. That they have a Tendency to the good of Men, has been proved already, in Part; and it will be as apparent, that they are *worthy to have God for their Author*, not only upon that Account, but because they are a Copy of the Nature of our Almighty and most mercifull Father; and are exhibited unto Men for promoting the *Honour and Glory* of the Divine Majesty.

WITH what admirable OEconomy and Wisdom this is consulted and illustrated, and our Notions of the Goodness of God, and all his moral Perfections and Attributes, rectified, and perfected, will better appear, when I treat of the Mediator, who is the appointed Head of all the Means for accomplishing the Religion of the End, which glorifies our Father who is in Heaven. Mean time, it may suffice to wipe off some of the Aspersions cast upon these *positive Excellencies* of Christianity by our Author; as if they were of no other Use in the World, but to dishonour God. But if his pretended Arguments absolutely and entirely fail of proving any thing like it; then he will be found to have been the Dishonourer of God, and a Blasphemer of Him, and his true Religion.

Now,

Now, though the Gospel forbids nothing that the Law of Nature commands, nor commands what that forbids; it is no Consequence, that the Gospel has made no advantageous Revelation, or necessary Addition; or that the Addition it makes, must therefore be a *Superstition*. His Words are, *pag. 57.* 'Nor can any Thing be a Part of Religion by one Law, [the Gospel] which by the other [the Law of Nature] is Superstition.' And immediately follows, 'Nor can Revelation make that the Will of God, which the Light of Nature continually represents as unworthy [on Account of that Superstition] of having God for its Author.'

HERE is a bold Charge indeed! The making *reveal'd Religion* the Commander of Superstition. Men indeed for want of using the Reason and Consideration that God has given them, may take an Occasion that was never given them, to be guilty of Superstition, by mistaking the Means as more necessary than the End of Religion; or by introducing Superstition, nay Idolatry into the Rites of it. But the Fault must be in the Persons guilty, the Revelation is blameless, its Commands and Institutions having a plain Design and a direct Tendency to the contrary. So far from corrupting Religion in its Means, that it is the greatest Improvement of the same, as I have made appear. So far from giving wrong Notions of God as a Ruler and Governor; that it illustrates all the Perfections of him who is the most wise and perfect Governor over our moral World. Here are no *Hieroglyphicks*, nor are there any *Charms*; nor is there any outward Shew

Shew capable of amusing or engrossing the Senses, to the diverting and disturbing the Mind.

WHAT then can he mean by the following Paragraph, but to confound and impose upon his Readers? ' If Men have been at all Times ' oblig'd to avoid Superstition, and embrace ' true Religion, there must have been at all ' Times sufficient Marks of Distinction; which ' could not arise from their having different Objects, since God is the Object of both; but ' from the having different Notions of him and ' his Conduct: Nay, allowing that the Light ' of Nature was sufficient to teach Men, that ' true Religion consists in entertaining such Notions of God, as are worthy of him; and Superstition in such as are unworthy of him; yet ' that alone would not enable Men, when they ' came to Particulars, to distinguish one from the ' other: And, therefore, the same Light of Nature must teach them what Notions are worthy, and what unworthy of having God for their Author. But how can there be such ' Marks flowing from the Nature of Religion ' and Superstition, if what is Superstition by ' the Light of Nature, can, notwithstanding ' these Marks, be made a Part of Religion by ' Revelation?' *Pag. 119.*

SUPPOSING the Light of Nature was sufficient to teach Men what Notions are worthy, and what are unworthy of having God for their Author; and so to distinguish between true Religion and Superstition: Why has not he by the Help of that Light of Nature, produced some Instances of Notions unworthy to have God for their Author, as applicable to *these* Positives of

Christianity under present Consideration? He has very often, and as falsely as often, affirm'd such Calumnies against them; yet never once offer'd a single Argument, or the least Shadow of one to prove it. But if bold senseless Affirmations, are instead of Arguments with him, I hope they wont so pass upon his Readers, who deserve better Treatment from such a pretending Reasoner; whatever these good and great Instances of Christ's Religion have met with from him.

THEY are indeed, as set forth in Scripture, intended as an effectual *Cure* of all Superstition and Idolatry, which had mix'd, or can mix, with the natural Means of Religion, the Worship of God through the Heathen, or the corrupted Christian World. That *Baptism* was design'd for wholly putting off, and throwing Idolatry aside is evident, because the idolatrous Nations, *Eph. xi. 3.* are called *Children of Wrath* in the Apostle's inoffensive Way of joining himself in the Expression; but are hereby made Children of the Covenant, Sons of God, and of Grace. That the *Lord's Supper* is intended as a *Preservative* of our Communion with the *one true* Mediator of Worship, against *Idolatry*, and the Superstition of false Worship of God, through a Communion with *false* Mediators (such are all *Dæmons*) is plain from that of the Apostle, *ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils, ye cannot be Partakers of the Lord's Table, and the Table of Devils.* It is very hard that the sovereign Medicine should be called the Disease, and by those who seldom, or never try it.

BUT

BUT how comes it to pass, that his Light of Nature, so sufficient as he says it is, never yet in all the past, nor in the present, (nor perhaps in all the future) Generations of the *Heathen* World, has been, or shall be able to supply Men with such worthy Notions of God, as to abolish, or so much as lessen the infinite Superstitions and Idolatries which have reign'd, to the Scandal of human Reason, and the Pity of the Light of Nature? What pitiful Arguments then must his be for deriving, generally, worthy Notions of God from the Light of Nature, when they run counter to Matter of Fact; and all the World can contradict him, with a safe Conscience?

NAY, I will add further, that these *Positives*, grounded as they are in the Faith of our Mediator dying a Propitiation for our Sins, were intended (and perhaps that is the Foundation of all his Spleen and Dislike) to have cured him, and all others of his way of thinking, of a Superstition that they actually lie under *Themselves*, and which they take no care to reform, whilst they calumniate others with the Crime; I mean their false, flattering, overweening Notions of the Goodness of God as Governor of Mankind. For that must certainly be Superstition, in the truest Account of it, which *adds* any Notion to any *moral* Attribute of GOD, contrary to what it really is; and so unworthy of it, as to have an ill Effect upon our Behaviour towards Him, our Neighbour, or Ourselves; or in other Words, so to behave towards the Religion of the Means, as to retard the Progress of the Religion of the End.

AND if it is too true, in Fact, that Persons of his way of thinking, love to distinguish themselves, by accumulating more Notions and Ideas to the Goodness of God, than is consistent with his Wisdom in governing the sinful Race of Men; and thence take occasion to think so unworthily of the Divine Conduct, as not to allow him to reveal to the World some deterring Mark, nor any awful, affecting Monument of his Displeasure against Sin, and of the foul Dishonour offer'd him in the Breach of his Laws; which could not before, but might be reveal'd presently after the *first* Transgression; the *Promise* of the Remedy being the first Dawn, and the first Principle whence all after Revelation flow'd: And if it is as bad an Extreme to imagine, that God is not displeased at a just Provocation, as to think he can be angry without a Cause: And if these flattering unworthy Notions of God and his Goodness, have, by direct Tendency, so bad an Influence upon their own Conduct, as to make them indifferent to sincere Repentance, and Prayer to God; and in Consequence of that, more careless and indolent to the Performance of the Religion of the End; how can these Men excuse themselves from Superstition? Or how pretend to enjoy true Religion? What room then for that Expostulation? *Pag. 41.* 'If Faith in God
'himself, no more than any other Act of Religion, is required for God's Sake, but our own;
'can Faith in one sent by God be required for
'any other End?' I only wish they would verily and indeed apply it to that End; and then there would be an End of their Disputing.

OUR Author is not satisfied with heaping up these Reproaches, but accuses them perhaps in an hundred Places of his Book, of being merely *arbitrary, arbitrarily commanded, commanded for commanding Sake, from mere Will and Pleasure.*

‘Where an instituted Religion differs from that of Nature, its Precepts must be arbitrary, as not founded in Nature and the Reason of Things, but dependent upon mere Will and Pleasure.’ ‘If Revelation requires more than the Relation of Things require, it would argue the Author of it to be of a tyrannical Nature, imposing upon his Subjects.’ And he draws this Consequence from his supposed Arbitrariness, ‘If God can command some Things arbitrarily, we can’t be certain, but he may command all Things so; for though some Commands should relate to Things in their own Nature good, yet how can we know that an arbitrary Being commands them for this Reason; and, consequently, since an arbitrary Will may change every Moment, we can never be certain of the Will of such a Being.’ ‘If God be an arbitrary Being, what a miserable Condition will Mankind be in! Since an arbitrary Will might change every Moment, and those Things which entitled Men to God’s Favour to-Day, might make them incur his Displeasure to-Morrow: Nay, he might at the same time have a secret Will opposite to his reveal’d Will; or might have different Wills for every different Person.’

THE Consequence is true enough, and very dismal, if the Premises were true; and therefore

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¹ Pag. 99.² P. 117.³ P. 26.

fore he ought to have been very sure of that, before he ventured to asperse God and his Religion at that rate. I suppose he means by an *arbitrary Command*, such as has no Reason, nothing but the mere Will and Pleasure of the Commander to support it. But this is very far from being the Case of the *Positives* we are speaking of, improperly indeed so called; because that too much includes the Idea of what he imputes to them. It has been before shewn, in treating of them, that they have abundant Reasons, all tending to the Benefit and Service of Man, for their Institution; and that they have a powerful, moral Operation upon us, for promoting both the Means and the End of true Religion. They are not good merely because they are commanded; but such is the Excellency of the Divine Commandments in the Christian Revelation, that whenever they are generally obligatory, and suppletory to the Law of Nature, they are likewise founded in, and adjusted to the Nature and Reason of Things; I mean, the changed State, the alter'd Relation, the fallen, peccant, different Nature of Man, which was introduced into the World upon the Entrance of Sin and Transgression; reveal'd, 'tis true, from Heaven to us, as to its first Introduction; but so true, that our Reason plainly perceives that there must have been a State of Innocence; and our Nature as plainly feels the Alteration to this Day.

THEY proceed from the Interposition and Favour of Heaven, as *secondary* Laws; but as much adapted to the new *secondary* State of our moral World, as the Law of Nature proceeding from the Relation between God and Man, was adapted to the primary State of Man, at his first Creation.

Creation. And as these Laws profess to have it for their Aim and Design, to recover Man to Obedience to the first primary Law of the Religion of the End, which is the Perfection and Happiness of his Nature, as far as Man is now capable of performing it; if the first Laws are primarily moral, the other may fitly be reckon'd *secondarily* moral; and ought to be obey'd as such, by all who are blessed and acquainted with the Revelation. They are not then arbitrary, but holy, just, and good, and as plainly *fit* and useful to the Eye of Reason, as Colours are evident to the Eye of the Body; like the Works of God, they carry in them the Marks of Divinity, being likewise founded in the Nature and Reason of Things, first made known, and then easily discern'd, by a Revelation from the God of Nature; wherein the Law of the *Remedy* appears as much to be a Transcript of the Mercy of God, and the Nature and Perfection of the *Mediator, God-Man*, as the Law of primitive Nature is a Transcript of the other moral Perfections of God, as will appear when I treat of the Mediator.

THOUGH a Man's Conscience does not smite and challenge him for omitting *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, as it does for Omission or Transgression of the Duties and Obligations of natural Religion; being each of them Matter of pure *Institution* and Revelation; yet being wisely super-added, in *Aid* of our impotent Nature in using the Means, and performing the Ends of the Religion of Nature, inviting and engaging our own Concurrence; after the Invitation is closed with, and the Engagement undertaken, profess'd, and solemnly recogniz'd, *they* also smite the Conscience

Reformation, upon the Violation of the Vows and Promises therein made, and repeated.

THUS Baptism serves to represent and enlighten us with the true State of human Nature, beset, as it is, within and without, by Temptations, Strivings, and Enemies to Virtue. There is a Concupiscence to Evil, and there is likewise a Concupiscence to Good, inherent to every Man; Virtue being agreeable to the native Dictates of his Mind, approving what bears that Character, and condemning the contrary; for *the Spirit* as truly *lusteth against the Flesh*, as this does against that.

BUT the weakest Part needs the most Help — Help is brought by these *Sacraments*, solemnly calling out, lifting, and lifting up the Mind, as oft as it flags, to its due Elevation, Rule, and Rectitude, above all the opposing Things in this World; in Pursuance of the Paths of Virtue, and in Prospect of its glorious Reward in *Christ*. As the *Holy Spirit* is the Promise and the Privilege of entering into that Covenant, and of the Return of Prayers purposely made for the *baptized*, in the Name of the *Mediator* of that Covenant; so the recognizing that Covenant, and the like Prayers for the *Communicants*, will be the renewing in the Mind that blessed Privilege and Assistance, in the *Lord's Supper*. And though Repentance goes before Baptism in the Aged, and Repentance and Prayer precede the other Sacrament, yet they both receive their continual Encouragement and Vigour from the last: Men go on, and grow up in the Confirmation and Strength of Virtue and Godliness; and refresh themselves by times with Joy and Consolation, in the due Use and Repetition of the last. Though one Sacrament enters the Man into a State of Pardon and Salvation, it is

the latter that *recognizes* and *secures* the former, till our Lord's coming again.

THE Inference therefore that our Author draws from Dr. *Prideaux's* Words will be of no Service to his Cause, though he repeats the Words three or four times, and lays the Stress of a Touchstone upon them, *pag.* 384. and elsewhere. The Words are these, 'If the Gospel varies from the Religion of Nature in any particular, or in the minutest Circumstance, is contrary to its Righteousness; that is strong enough to destroy the whole Cause; and make all Things else that can be said for its Support, totally ineffectual.' But they will do him no manner of Service. Had he been so just, as to have cited the Words immediately following, they would effectually have confuted the Argument drawn from that Authority. 'But it is (says he) so far from having any such Flaw therein, that it is the perfectest Law of Righteousness which was ever yet given unto Mankind; and both in commanding of Good, as well as in forbidding Evil, vastly exceeds all others that went before it, and prescribes much more to our Practice in both, than the wisest and highest Moralist was ever able without it to reach in Speculation.'

It is certain, that the Gospel does not vary from the Law of Nature in any particular, or in the minutest Circumstance, contrary to the Righteousness of that Law, but, on the contrary, promotes it in every Particular, and in every Circumstance; commanding what that commands, and forbidding what that forbids; still it does not follow that the Law of Nature and the Gos-

pel are the same, or that the last adds nothing more effectual and explicit to the first. He knew in his Conscience, that the Gospel recommends and enforces *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, the Doctrine of *the true Mediator*, and of the *Resurrection of the Body*, as its *peculiar Excellencies*, unknown to his Law of Nature. And every Body else does them that Justice, as to confess, that by their Help, *they can do all Things through Christ* thus *strengthening them*, as well Repentance and Prayer, as the Religion of the End in all its Branches, impracticable by *Apostates* from Christianity.

I WOULD therefore ask his Admirers, whether they believe he has thrown out all these bitter Reflections against the Religion of his Country (not true, because we are born to it; but because it approves itself to be the true Religion that came down from Heaven, against all Arguments to the contrary) ignorantly, or wilfully: If ignorantly, he deserves to be condemned for knowing no better; if wilfully, he deserves to be shunn'd as a wicked Writer.

BUT I hope, though he ridicules Miracles as any Testimony, *pag.* 169, 170. they will, upon better Consideration, perceive there are *internal Excellencies* of these Christian Doctrines, sufficient to prove them to come from God: And as they carry no Notions with them *unworthy to have Him for their Author*, they will, upon our Author's own Plan, *pag.* 197. admit them to be true and genuine Christianity. He, in part, confesses the Use of a Revelation: 'But first I must premise, that in supposing an external Revelation, I take it for granted, that there is
' sufficient

‘ sufficient Evidence of the Person’s being sent
 ‘ from God who publish’d it: And I further
 ‘ own, that this Divine Person, by living up to
 ‘ what he has taught, has set us a noble Example.
 ‘ — This, and every Thing of the same Na-
 ‘ ture, I freely own, which is not inconsistent
 ‘ with the Law of God’s being the same, whe-
 ‘ ther internally, or externally reveal’d.’ *Pag. 8.*
 And elsewhere ‘ It might be agreeable to the
 ‘ Divine Goodness, to send Persons to recal-
 ‘ Men to a strict Observance of the Law of Na-
 ‘ ture.’ *Pag. 256.*

BUT what Need of *sufficient* Evidence of such
 a Person’s coming from God, when he means
 nothing by Revelation but the Republication of
 the Law of Nature? That is another of our
 Author’s *Inconsistencies*; he affirms every where,
 agreeably to the Scope of his Book, that the
 Light of Nature is that all-sufficient, all-perfect
 Guide for finding out the Law of Nature, or his
 Gospel, that he that runs may read, and as cer-
 tainly and unerringly as the Eye distinguishes
 Colours, or the Ear Sounds. What occasion
 then for *sufficient Testimony*? Would he have Mira-
 cles wasted upon proving that which no body
 could miss? It is not the Republication of that
 Law which is so much wanted for increasing the
 Number of *Deists*, nor yet an Example of exact
 Obedience to it, which is very valuable: But
those very Things, which our Author either
 ignorantly or wilfully rejects and abuses, and
 what every Body else means by *Christianity*;
 those comfortable and divine Means, which God
 in his great Mercy and Compassion has appoint-
 ed for saving Sinners, *i. e.* all Mankind; being
 the most reasonable and effectual that can possi-

bly be propos'd for assuring Men of the Pardon of their Sins, and yet at the same time securing better Obedience to the Religion of the End.

AND therefore it is intreated of those *Deists* that they would, and it is hoped that when they have consider'd better of the Connexion of these worthy Means with that noble End, they will, for the Sake of that noble End, and for their own Comfort and Advantage every way, think them worthy of all Acceptation. They must conceive an Indignation against our Author, (as a common Enemy to Mankind, who all have an universal Persuasion that God in his great Goodness *can* interpose in their greatest Exigence) when in his arrogant Dictature to God himself, out of his Light of Nature, he tells them 'what he can, or *cannot* command,' pag. 89. implying the Impossibility of the Grace, or Revelation of such Things; and all upon the silly, stupid, baffled Foundation, as it follows, because '*God is immutably the same for ever.*'

AND seeing he offers no better Reasons for setting aside the most rational System of compleat true Religion, that is in the World; they would think it high time to alter their Opinion of him, and his Performance; set them aside, and become true Christians.



C H A P. VII.

The Choice, and Appointment of the
MEDIATOR.

IT is natural for every Sinner, *i. e.* every Man, to confess, from the feeling of his own Experience, that Sin and Transgression creates a Strangeness and Distance between God and himself, more or less, according to the Quantity and Quality of his Offences; and that a Load of conscious Guilt, by a kind of centrifugal Propensity, carries him from the Center of his chief Good; not easy to be recover'd, or brought round again to his proper Sphere, without some powerful extraneous Attraction intervening: For that Strangeness and Distance would otherwise be gathering Strength from the Law, which is the Strength of Sin; and from our Weakness in not being able to keep it with an exact Obedience. The Law is *holy, just, and good*, and because we are not like to it in Compliance, it condemns the Conscience of Guilt, and delivers it over to Punishment.

It has been observ'd before, that the natural Means of Recovery, Repentance, and Prayer, had in a manner lost their Force, were become lifeless and dispirited; operated as incompetent
Means;

Means; or, at best, but as incompleat ones. This introduces the *Need* of the Mediator, *Christ Jesus*; who is the efficacious Head of all the Means for recovering Man to the Performance of the Religion of the End, according to the Ability of his present State.

AND as the Idea of a MEDIATOR consists in not being a Mediator, *ex parte*, but between two, *God and Man*: The first Enquiry is, who shall appoint this Mediator? The Answer is, GOD. *Job* was sensible of this¹: *He is not a Man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in Judgment. Neither is there any Days-Man (juoms, Umpire, Mediator in LXX.) betwixt us, that might lay his Hand upon us both. If one Man sin against another, God [the civil Magistrate, one of the called-Gods in Scripture] shall judge him; but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?*² The New Testament indeed gives in the Answer: Who indeed should appoint, but He who was to accept? How much soever the Interposition of a Mediator may be to the Satisfaction of the offending Inferior, and to the Relief of his Wishes and Distresses; yet the Honour of the Superior, the Heavenly King, upon the Reparation of which all depends, is so much at *his Choice*, that none but he was proper to determine it. Man could with Certainty pitch upon none but whom he was acquainted with; but every one of his own kind is too mean and incompetent to be thought of. Therefore God seeing there was none to help, laid help upon one, a mighty one, unknown to us, the Son of his Bosom, the next to Himself.

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¹ *Job* ix. 32, 33.

² *1 Sam.* ii. 25.

HE is the *offended* Party, and consequently knows best the Degree of his own Displeasure, and what Terms of Reconciliation will appear to the rational World most glorious to himself; at the same time they are most advantageous unto Man. Besides, he is a Superior of that infinite Distance, that any Terms, practicable by Man, had been Favour and Condescension enough, though never so difficult of Performance. And every Sovereign, when inclined to shew Favour to a rebellious Subject, has an undoubted Right to *propose* the Conditions, and *appoint* the Terms, upon which he shall be taken into Favour, and to what Degree of Favour. If no Terms had been publish'd for the Rebel to comply with, as a publick Satisfaction to the Sovereign, there had been no Reconcilement; or if he took other Methods which he thought properer to reinstate himself, there could be no Hopes of Favour, because no Compliance to the *Terms* that Favour was condition'd upon. It is the *Appointment* therefore of the Terms, that gives *Being* to a State of Reconciliation, and without that there could be no Right to, nor Claim of Favour.

As Man, therefore, can't pretend to be the offended Party, it must be a great Presumption in Persons of our Author's Way of thinking, to incroach upon this common Right of the sovereign Lord of the Universe, refusing to comply with his *known* Terms and Conditions; and substituting others short of them, (as will afterwards appear) I mean bare Repentance, and Dependence upon the Goodness of God, exclusive of *Faith* in the *Mediator*, as all-sufficient to make their Peace with him, upon their own Bottom.

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WHAT though God is every where present, hearing the Prayers of all Mortals ; can that be a good Reason to supersede the Need of a Mediator ? By the same Argument, the Prayers of the Supplicant would likewise be superseded, seeing he knows all his Wants, and is able to relieve without his Application. But the *Appointment* of a Mediator gives the Supplicant a true Notion of the Nature of himself as he is a *Sinner*, and also of the Nature of God being *Holy*, as well as Good ; and that there can be no Approach nor Communication between the Purity of one Nature and the Sinfulness of the other, but by the *Intervention* of him, whom he appointed to *reconcile all Things unto himself, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven.*

BUT by their false, disjointed Notion of the Goodness of God to the Exclusion of his Holiness, they undervalue and disparage the Divine Appointment ; under a false Shew of Humility, they arrogantly take upon themselves to dishonour all the Divine Attributes, concern'd in the Government of Men ; and endeavour to deprive Mankind of the greatest Comfort and Blessing in this World. Where Man is indeed the offended Party (as is often the Case between Man and Man) he has an undoubted Right in Virtue of the Injury he has received, to depute his own Judgment of, or Satisfaction expected for it, to an Umpire of *his own choosing*, some *third Person*, more righteous and impartial than himself in such a Case : But in the other Case, there is neither natural Equality, nor offer'd Injury to be pretended, on Man's Side.

IT is just and fit then, that God should have the Appointment of the Mediator, or attoning Person, who was to administer to him in *Things pertaining to himself*. And no Person takeib this Honour to himself, but he that is called, or accepted of by God; his very appointing and accepting him is an uncontestable Argument of his Love to the World, and of his previous relenting Mercy for pardoning penitent Sinners, and being the Saviour of the World; and in Consequence of his Appointment, sending him into the World to illustrate all his *moral*, brightest Perfections, before Angels, Men and Sinners, in that chosen Method of doing it.

AFTER God had been so gracious to grant a new Testament or Covenant, and some Surety of that Covenant had been required, and the Choice of that Surety left to Man; Man must have chose some obnoxious Scrub like himself, neither harmless nor undefiled, nor without many Sins, to be sure somebody that would be *partial* to Man without due Regard to God's Honour, and Dignity, and therefore justly refusable by God, as being himself as much indebted to him, in the vindictive Part of his Law, as those he pretended to engage for, or undergo anything in their Stead, and consequently too partial, and unequal to be any thing like a *Mediator*. And in this, the great Presumption and moral Iniquity of *Idolatry* seems to consist; 99 Parts in 100 of the Idolatry of the World consisting in the Choice and Worship of a *false* Mediator between God and Man: Which false Foundation of coming to God embues the whole System of Worship and Service with false Fears, and false Hopes; with false Prayer, with

no Repentance, or that which is fallacious ; in short, with all Sorts of *artificial* Methods of making Men religious without Virtue, *i. e.* without Religion ; Idolatry (the same may be said of Superstition) being nothing else but are Equivalent, *invented* by Men, and encouraged by the Devil, to satisfy the Conscience, and at the same Time indulge the Flesh, therefore call'd its *Work*.

BUT when God, not Man, *pitch'd* upon the Surety himself, he *obliged* himself to accept him, paying down the Debt of our Punishment, (the Mulct of Death) purely and absolutely on our Account, and to release us from it : The Debt of Death being thus paid by the Mediator, Acknowledgments are due both to him who pays it for us, and also to him who *accepts* the Tender of such Payment, in acquittal of the *worst* Consequences of that Debt ; whilst we still are left to pay, and every Man does actually pay the temporary Fine of Separation of Soul and Body ; yet the *Redemption of the Body* being effected by him, we are justify'd in the *Body* from the second or everlasting Death, as well as in the Soul from Sin.

AND he who was called and made Choice of, was no less willing to proffer himself to the Work. It is the *Creditor*, not the Debtor, who has the Choice of the *Surety*. Therefore the Mediator of the new and better Covenant, the High Priest of our Profession, was *called, consecrated, inaugurated* by God himself. In a perfect Reconcilement between *such* a Superior and Inferior, there must be honourable Terms provided for the former, or none at all. The Proposal of them in all Reason, Deference, and Decency, must always and only be allow'd to come from
the

the *offended Superior*: Forasmuch as that is the only Way he can in Honour treat, or be treated with. Having a Right to our Obedience which we continued not in; a Right as our Governor still remain'd in him, to reclaim us to Homage and Duty, by any Methods of Grace he liked best, without consulting us.

BECAUSE our Business is to obey, not offer to make Amendments in the Terms of an *Act of Grace*; not propound, but receive Conditions of Peace; whatsoever God, or the Mediator sent by him, shall reveal to be his Will and Pleasure. Thus the Proposal regularly came, as it did, first from him principally, who was *principally* offended, *i. e.* God the Father. For this Reason the Gospels, especially St. *John's*, so very much represent Christ to be the SON OF GOD, sent from *God*, or the Father, for that Purpose. Shewing the Doctrine to be of God the *Father*, not from the Messiah himself; much less a Revelation from Flesh and Blood, but from the *Father*¹. Though the *Gospels* and *Acts* of the Apostles don't mention the Word *Mediator*, they describe him in Terms equivalent. *As Son of God, and Son of Man*; as *saving us from our Sins*; *giving his Life a Ransom for many*; and his Blood, *the Blood of the new Testament for the Remission of Sins*;

¹ *Matth. xvi. 17.* This explains *John vi. 44.* No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him: Because a Mediator or Advocate, in whose Name all Things were to be done, is not an Advocate or Mediator of one; but God [the Father] is one Party, and Man the other; he is not a Mediator between God and God, or Man and Man, but God and Man; for God being necessarily but one, the other Party must be Man: If you know two Angles of a Triangle, you are consequentially drawn to know the other.

Sins; and preaching Repentance in his Name to all the World for Remission of Sins; and as procuring all Blessings to those who pray for them in his Name; that all Men should honour him, even as they honour the Father, and as they believe in one, should believe also in the other¹; and the preaching the Word of Reconciliation, i. e. preaching Peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all, that the Churches were purchased by his Blood². And the Epistles, which very often expressly mention the Mediator, represent God in Christ reconciling the World to himself, when we are said, to be saved by Grace, thro' Faith, in this Mediator, not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God³: For which Reason Faith is affirm'd to come from Hearing; Hearing from the Word of God; the Word of God from Sending; not of Man, but God's sending his Son, (so often called the Word) who sent his Apostles, who sent others to perpetuate the Gospel of Peace, or the Word of Reconciliation between God and Man, to the End of the World. And because our Lord Jesus Christ is the undertaking Head of all the Means of Reconciliation and Salvation, therefore are we sometimes saluted and blessed with the Grace of God; sometimes with the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. What are the Ends proposed from this Appointment, will best appear under the Office of our Mediator, as soon as we have previously consider'd.

C H A P.

¹ See the Reasons why the Gospels were not, nor could not be so explicit as the Epistles. *Bishop of London's Past.* 3. pag. 18, 24, &c. 32, &c. and 78, &c. where the Opinion of those who make the Gospels the only, or chief Rule of Faith, is clearly refuted.

² Eph. xi. 8. Heb. x. 10. ³ Rom. x. 15.



C H A P. VIII.

The Nature and Person of the Mediator.

IT is necessary to consider the *true Nature* of this appointed Mediator, because that is the Ground and Qualification for all his salutary Offices; and the more we are apprized of that, the stronger and more confident will be our Faith in the other. For such is the most admirable Reason and Wisdom of the Divine Appointments, in laying his general Laws and Commandments so firmly in the *Nature of Things*, as to secure all those good Effects, which God, or Man could expect from them. His Providence has frequently reveal'd and discover'd the Nature of Things for the Benefit of Man, which was unknown before. But the grand View and Project of all his Revelations purposely given to the Children of Men, at sundry Times, and divers Manners, was at last fully to unfold the Nature, and the Offices of this mighty Person, the Captain of Salvation, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

WITHOUT Revelation assisting, our Reason could not have found it out, but *after* it is discover'd, it needs no Assistance to perceive it agreeable to the Nature of the best constituted Mediator, that the Reason of Man, or even the Wis-

dom of God could devise. Thus a Revelation from a superior Reason, the Perfection of all Reason, may kindly discover to, instruct, and improve inferior, weaker Reason, as (if great Things may be compared to small) a *Sir Isaac Newton* may make a Discovery in the natural World; and when, and *after* discover'd, the inferior Reason of all Men may approve, and rejoice in it as accurately and harmoniously adjusted to the Government of the natural World, as the other is to the moral. And if natural Light could not have reach'd the Discovery in one Case, as it might and did in the other; is not the Reason of Man infinitely benefited and obliged for the Illumination, and Salvation of such a Discovery? Perhaps, this mighty Deliverer, this *Word of God*, may, by his Condescension to their State and Nature, be the Saviour of many other lapsed embody'd Spirits in the manifold Systems of the Universe; for he is represented not only *faithful and true*, but *to have on many Crowns, and a Name written, that no Man knew but himself*.

Especially, since by all the ablest Judges of Reason, it must be unanimously agreed, upon a thorough Examination, that the fittest and most compleat Mediator between God and Man, ought certainly to be constituted, just as the Revelation represents of the two Natures of both, and equally partaking of each, *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*; as the Medium of Communication, and the Center of Reconciliation exactly placed between both. The two Natures united together, don't make a middle Nature, but a middle Person acting by these two Natures; with Men, he

is the Representative of God ; with God, the Representative of Men. As he has the Nature of Man he differs from God he mediates with, and having the Nature of God, he differs from Man. Being thus constituted, he is sure to do equal Justice to both Parties, at Enmity. How should he not do right, how can he possibly wrong us, who are Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh ? Or how neglect the Rights, or infringe upon any of the Prerogatives of God, who is God himself, descended from the Bosom of his Father ? therefore called *our* Righteousness, and also the Righteousness of God, and in both respects the *Son* of Righteousness, and *the righteous one*. What makes the Execution of the Office of an Umpire so nice and difficult, and so constant a Jealousy attending it, of favouring one Side more than another ? But the Want of a Medium that affords *sufficient* Security and Pledge to both Parties against the least Self-Interest or Partiality ; and in Concern so equally distant from, and indifferent to each, as to be perfectly disinterested and impartial towards both. But in *this* Mediation, there is the *Tie* of *Nature* moreover to both ; which is the highest Pledge and Security that can be given to each, that the Interest of both shall be equally thought of, and consulted. By virtue of his Divine Nature as Son of God, he is incapable of doing anything in his Mediation, but what should be to the Glory of God the Father, and the Illustration of the Attributes of the Deity ; he is *faithful* in all his House with the Fidelity of a *Son*, who has an Interest himself therein, transcending the Faithfulness of any Servant : And as touch'd with our Infirmities, he is incapable of forgetting to be a *merciful* High Priest for us.

AND as in no other, but himself, was ever the true Nature of God, and the true Nature of Man united, in *one Christ*, so is he alone the *one true Mediator*, the *one best Medium* of Congruity that can ever be thought of, for establishing perfect Peace and Reconciliation; to the Intent, that both Parties might be secure, and are thereby admirably secured of an *equal Interest* in him; that the *Honour* and *Authority* of one might as well be consulted and saved; at the same Time, the *Sins* and *Weakness* of the other were condescended to, pity'd, and pardon'd, unto Salvation. Considering God as a *Governor*, and ourselves as his *Subjects*, if he would be extreme in rigour of *Justice*, to mark what we have done amiss, who could abide it? by the Deeds of the Law, and the Covenant of Works, no Flesh could stand in his Sight. If, on the other hand, he should be so extremely remiss in the Easiness of his *Goodness*, as to forgive upon every repeated Offence, without any farther Consideration or Condition; who would value to obey, or consider himself under Dominion, or bound by any Law to serve God? Therefore there must arise a *third Person* (seeing the Nature of God and his Attributes are immutable, and the natural obedient Powers of Man have been changed and alter'd) as a *Medium* of Justice, and a *Medium* of Goodness, to be dispensed to the Sons of Men.

AND because it required the utmost Wisdom of God to reconcile and accomplish this; therefore the Person who came down from Heaven to effect it, is said to be the *ὁ λόγος*, the *Word* that was with God, and was God, the *supreme Reason* of all Things, and the *Wisdom* of God unto
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 Man's

Man's Salvation. Thus the inferior Wisdom and Reason of Man may rest satisfy'd, that he shall be taken Care of by that Share or Moiety of Christ, his *human* Nature; as God the *Father* is taken Care of, by the other Moiety of his *Divine* Nature¹.

AND this wonderful, mighty Counsellor, Prince of Peace, the Mediator between God and Man, being thus constituted of both Natures; naturalizes our Notion of, and Faith in him, to our Mind and Reason, and gives the greatest Assurance possible, that he is likewise in his *Office* the *surest*, the *justest*, the most *capable*, the most *acceptable* Mediator to both Parties that could be pitch'd upon, in all the Universe; and, at the same Time, affords the greatest Proof that God's Ways with Sinners are *equal*, and at an infinite Distance from *Arbitrariness*. Whom God reposes himself upon, we have all the Reason in the World to confide in the same Person, since he is as *qualify'd* and *disposed* by *Nature*, as he is *authorized* by *Office* to make a thorough Reconciliation. What can be better adjusted than this Belief of

P 3 his

¹ *Irenæus* and *Cyprian* speak sublimely upon this Union of the two Natures. *Opportuerat enim mediatorem dei & hominum per suam ad utrosque domesticitatem, & ad amicitiam & ad concordiam utrosque reducere, & facere, ut deus assumeret hominem, & homo se dederat deo. Qua enim ratione filiorum adoptionis ejus participes esse possemus, nisi per filium, eam quæ est ad ipsum, recepissemus ab eo communionem, nisi verbum ejus communicasset, caro factum?* *Iren. L. iii. cap. 20. Indulgentiæ divinæ & gratiæ arbiter & magister, sermo & filius dei mittitur, qui per prophetas omnes illuminator & doctor humani generis prædicabatur, hic est virtus dei; hic ratio, hic sapientia ejus & gloria: hic in virginem illabitur, carnem spiritu sancto co-operante induitur. Deus semper cum homine miscetur, hic deus noster, hic Christus est, qui mediator duorum hominem induit, quem perducit ad patrem.* *Cypr. de van. idol.*

his equal sharing both Natures, in the Fulness and Perfection thereof, for ascertaining us, who are apt to judge every one to stand affected, as they stand *related* by *Blood* and *Nature*, of the equal Concern, and all Perfection of this Mediator of Redemption, and Intercession for us?

MOSES was a Mediator, not by Nature, but *Office* only, chosen *first* by the People who were in a Consternation at the great quaking of the Mountain, luminous Appearance and Voices of the Majesty and Greatness of God, supernatural and terrible; and *approved* afterwards by God. But his Province was in the old Covenant, he had no Concern in the New. The Mosaick Statutes and Judgments, the special Policy of Rites, and the peculiar Ordinances of Ceremonies, were the second Covenant, the old Original, *do this and live*, put under wholesome Discipline, into an actual Lineage and Preparation for the Birth of the Mediator of the explicitly appearing new and better Covenant: They terminated in this Life; therefore called *Statutes that were not good, and Judgments whereby they should not live*¹; and the Burthen so great, that neither their Fathers, nor any of their Children were able to bear a Law
by

¹ *Ezek. xx. 25. Should not live*: The probable Sense is, should not live *always*; because the Design of Providence in those *Statutes* and *Judgments* concerning *Meats*, *Sacrifice*, and other Rites of *Severation* was temporary, to preserve them a *peculiar* Nation, a *separate unmixing* People from all the Nations round about, by Ordinances to eat and sacrifice what other Nations *worshipp'd* as the Ox and his Tribe, and to *abstain* from Meats, and the Manner of Dressing, which were probably in the greatest Esteem with them, as *Blood*, the *Flesh* of Swine, *Birds of Prey*, *Fish without Scales*, a *Kid seetb'd in its Mother's Milk*, &c. All Communication in Victuals and Worship being so cut off, it was morally impossible for them,

by the Performance of which *merely* no *Flesh* possibly could be justified, any more than by Obedience to the first original Law or Covenant: With respect to the *Jews* therefore call'd the *first* Covenant, couching under it the second and better, into which the Apostles endeavoured to lead them, as into the true Sense, End, and Meaning of the other.

WHILST all the Expectation they had of entering into *Life* was the same as the old Patriarchal Way, the Love of God and our Neighbour, in Hopes of the PROMISE of the Covenant of Grace; which Covenant, as to the End of it, was couch'd under the Decalogue, wrote, not by *Moses*, but by the Finger of the Mediator of it, upon Tables called the *Tables of the Covenant*, kept in an Ark, called the *Ark of the Covenant*; as to the *Mediator* of it, veiled under the Prophecies, Types, and Shadows of the good Things to come; renew'd with *Abraham* in the Sanction of Faith, extended to all Nations 430 Years before their Law by *Moses*; these were the wondrous Things of God's Law, which *David* knew to be conceal'd, and prayed to have a clear Sight of. The *High-Priest* with his Gifts and Sacrifices was the Mediator of that old ritualiz'd Covenant; and serv'd as a Figure and Parable (till the Time of Reformation) of the Mediator

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of them, keeping those Statutes, to commix with other People during the Term they were to be separate: But such occasional Statutes could not be so good as the moral Law, which obliged always, and equally in all Places. These Severation-Rites from other Nations are called *Statutes* and *Judgments*. See *Lev. xx. 22, &c.* And that Law of Ordinances was imposed upon that stiffnecked People, *because of the great Transgression*, IDOLATRY, of the Neighbour Nations they were so prone to.

of the new and better; and the Offerings and Sacrifices of the former, which took away only ceremonial Impurities, the purifying of the Flesh, were a Figure of the Sins and Pollutions of *Conscience*, which could only possibly be removed from any Sinner by the Blood of the Mediator of the *second*; purifying and propitiating every Guilt pertaining to Conscience. In short, the whole of that Law was a School-master to bring them to *Christ*, who was the real End and true Construction of it. The *Jews* first and second Covenant respected *Moses*, and the *Messiah*; whilst the first and second Covenant with the *human Race*, had respect to the *first* and *second* Adam, *Christ*. The Reward of *their* first Covenant, or School-master, being confined to *literal* Canaan, was *temporal* Felicity, as well to every private Person, as to the publick, and without any Failure, as often as either of them kept up to the Righteousness of duly observing the Ceremonies thereof; in which Sense the Observation of the Psalmist held exactly true, *that he never saw the Righteous forsaken, nor their Seed begging their Bread*. With respect to the other Covenant and its Rewards, they were *Strangers* and Pilgrims of promiscuous Fortune.

AND in order to take our Nature upon him, he despised not to receive his mysterious Birth into this World from a Woman *only*; that as from a Woman was the Beginning of our Sin and Misery, so from a Woman might be the Beginning of our Restitution to Life and Happiness eternal. And who can question the Power of God, which is bounded by nothing but what is impossible, or unfit to be done, being able to unite the Divine and Human Nature into *one* *Christ*

Christ or *Mediator*, equally consisting of both ? Which reduces the Credibility of it, with respect to internal Evidence, to the same Certainty with that of the Creation, which the Reason of Man cannot deny.

IF therefore Reason allows God a Power of creating out of *nothing*; and there are so many Absurdities overtaking the contrary Supposition, that there is no Pretence for disbelieving it: Why not allow that God can make a *new Thing*, a second Adam, out of TWO SOMETHINGS; for the Redemption of Mankind, who had destroyed themselves, after he had created them? Accordingly in *Luke* i. 35. the Son of God, who was therefore perfect God, taking our Nature from the *Virgin's* Womb, and united by Birth to the Son of Man, to be perfect Man also, is called the Son of the HIGHEST; the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; nothing of that Sort is impossible with God, ver. 37. And Christ is elsewhere called the Power, as well as the Wisdom of God unto Salvation, 1 *Cor.* i. 24.

It was necessary that he should be born in this extraordinary Way, that his human Nature might be in the same upright untainted State with that of the *first Adam*, as he came out of his Maker's Hands, and by his exemplary unerring Obedience therein, might vindicate the Righteousness and the Practicableness of that moral Law given unto Man, so exactly suited to his Nature and the Relation between God and Man; and so be free from any the least Sin of his own, when he offer'd up his Life for the Sins of the repenting World.

W H E N

WHEN the *Almighty* undertakes to make *one* Person out of *two* Natures, shall vain Philosophy dispute and pretend a Difficulty how these Things can be? Especially when the *two* intelligent Agents, or Principles of Acting, consisting of Understanding, and Will, Divine, and Human, make *one* Person in the Sense of *Interposer pro hac vice*, (not an eternal Person) which Sort of Person the Mediator has taken up for a *Time*, to be laid down at the Consummation of all Things, when *God will be all in all*. Has not God made Man the Center and Connection between the Angelical and animal World? And when the *reconciling all Things to Himself* requires his Power and Wisdom, shall there be wanting a *competent Medium*, consisting equally of his own *uncreated* Nature, and the *created* Nature of Man, true Son of God of a true Father, true Son of Man of a true Mother? More particularly, when there is little or no Objection as to the Difficulty of the manner how, but what is solv'd in the Person of the Objector, who is himself a Medium of immaterial and material Natures: Let him reconcile the Difficulties of that Matter of Fact, the Union of Soul and Body; and then he will be prepared to answer to himself, as well as others, the Union of God and Man in the Person of Christ.

THEY must be *minute* Philosophers indeed, who can suppose the Power of God in Aid of his own Will and Pleasure, incapable of effecting an Union of the Divine and Human Nature. For to ask them in their own Way, after the manner of Men, is it not much easier to unite two Somethings, how different soever in Substance and Essence,

sence, by a Medium they know nothing of, than to make a World (and perhaps innumerable many) out of *Nothing*? He is wonderful in his other Doings, why not in the Birth of him who is called *wonderful*? 'The Souls of Men, says *Simplicius* on *Epiſt.* c. 1. are so contriv'd, as to 'link together into one Person, an Heavenly 'and Earthly Nature.' Who then can suggest the Want of Divine Power for uniting into one Person the Divine and Human Nature? *Conven-
nerunt simul sempiterna Divinitas & temporalis Hu-
manitas, & eo tenore facta est utriusq; naturæ Uni-
tas,* says *Cyprian*. When the Power and the Spirit of the *Highest* interposes, how easy is it for the *express* Image of the Father to unite the *made* Image of God, made by the *Word* of God, to himself; in order to restore the *lost* Resemblance to its *primitive* Attitude and Aspect, to Truth and Virtue, and to the Love of both, in the Understanding, Will, and Affections?

THIS then is the only true, secure Philosophy of Heaven and Earth, for exhibiting the trueſt, the perfectest, and most compleat Mediator between God and Man. And all Opinions derogatory from either the Divine or Human Nature, which together are essentially necessary to constitute him *this* Mediator, are corruptive of the Fundamental Faith in Christ, and eat like a Gangrene into this vital Principle of Christianity; and are the more likely to be *vain* for two Reasons: 1. Because all Falshood and vain Philosophy arises either from Mens joining those Notions or Ideas of Things, which God and the Reason of Things have divided, and made to disagree; or else *dividing* those Notions and Ideas which he has actually join'd and made

to

to agree, for the Service of Men, and for the Manifestation of his own Wisdom and Power, Justice and Goodness. 2. Because the plain Notion that arises out of this, is exactly consonant to what the holy Scriptures would plainly inculcate upon us: And the endear'd Excellency that adorns it, is, That it falls into the Apprehension of the Bulk of Christians of ordinary Capacity; for whose Sake the Religion of *Jesus* came down from Heaven for the saving of Souls; and may be said *to be hid from the wise and prudent*, (who always darken the Matter the more they dispute about it) *whilst it is reveal'd unto Babes*.

FOR they as clearly and universally perceive from the Phrase *Son of God*, *his only begotten Son*, That he as truly and equally partakes of the Divine Nature, as by the Phrase *Son of Man*, that he has truly assum'd our human Nature, and is equally interested in both of them. It is certain no other Sense of it came down from Heaven, or was written for our Learning, but that which concerns our Obedience, and the directest Way of bringing us thither, through the Mediator, who is the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*. And, because this Doctrine is design'd for common Edification and Salvation, the Glory of its Sacredness and Soundness, its Plainness and Usefulness consists in being adapted to general Apprehension, as the Foundation of Christianity, for the best Religion and Benefit of the World: Which supersedes the nice Skill, and subtle Distinctions of learned Schemes, and frees the Mind from the Mazes of invented Hypotheses.

SUCH Ideas of the Son of God, and Son of Man, united into our Mediator, the Redeemer, and

and Intercessor, the Saviour. and Judge of the World, are adequate to the religious Affair that belongs to us, and takes in all the affecting, influencing, and concerning Thoughts of that glorious Dispensation; whilst abstract Thoughts and Ideas fly off *in infinitum*, nor is any Pains hardly able to condense them into Use and Service, whilst we sojourn in a Tabernacle of Flesh. There is a *ne plus ultra* in every Vegetable, in every Animal, in every Element; after we have deduced the Knowledge of their Uses, and Properties relative to us, and their Use is their Nature with respect to us. And if, when we scrutinize further, we hardly guess aright at Things upon Earth, how shall our searching here ever discover any thing farther of the Nature of the Things that are in Heaven? Their Use and Design is known to our digesting Reason, and keeping strictly to the same (which is all that concerns it) very easy of Digestion, and very foodful to the eternal Life we wish for there. But if we will refuse our Vi-ctuals 'till we are thoroughly acquainted with the Manner how it digests and turns to Nourishment, we deserve to starve.

IT is very injurious, therefore, for any to assert, that the Notion of the Mediator of Christians was taken up, by Way of *Accommodation* to the Heathen Mediators, in order to reconcile them the sooner to that Profession. Does Truth accommodate itself to Error? Is not Truth *mensura recti, & obliqui*? If there was no true Mediator, how could there be any false ones? Falsehood, Ignorance, Folly, and Vice must first be removed, before Truth, Knowledge, Wisdom, or Duty can be planted in their Room. The Heathen Nations in Tract of Time, as before observed,

served, having lost the original traditional Promise of the true Mediator, corrupted it with foolish Imaginations without End, and with Inventions ridiculous beyond Measure. The wisest of them, the *Platonists*, and *Pythagoreans* held a Mediation between God and mortal Man as a Principle of Religion; because the Meanness of Man was unworthy to have Access, and approach the high, lofty, transcendent, pure Deity; therefore erected *Dæmons* of a middle, ministerial Nature; and their Belief was, that God had left the Government and Administration of the World to them; and their Faith and Tenet was, *That God does not mix or mingle with Men (or take human Nature upon him) but all the Intercourse and Communication between the Gods and Men is by the Means and Mediation of Dæmons*. Though *Homer* had more truly observed in his *Odys.* long before that it was not unworthy the Gods, superior to *Dæmons*, to descend upon Earth and converse with Men for their Information and Service.

IN Consequence of which, the Worship of God was turn'd into, and swallowed up with Idolatry; the Worship of *Devils* instead of himself, or their Dependance upon them, instead of the true Mediator to introduce them to God. It was accordingly the leading Design of Christianity, when addressed to them, to *destroy these Works of the Devil*, and totally abolish Idolatry, and the consequent Corruption of Morals, owing to these false Mediators; before the Belief and Efficacy, the true Worship of God, and Reformation of Manners

ὁ θεὸς ἀνθρώπων, οὐ μίγνυται, ἀλλὰ, διὰ Δαιμονίων
 πᾶσα ἑστὶν ὁμιλία καὶ ἡ διάλεκτος θεοῖς πρὸς ἀνθρώπους.
Plato Sympos.

Manners from the Reception of the *one true* Mediator could possibly take Place.

ALL the Rabble of false Mediators, who by Nature were no Gods, who had no *Appointment*, no manner of *Capacity*, but what the blind infatuated Worshippers bestowed upon them; were first to be dispossest'd out of the awaken'd Reason of Men, before a Foundation could be laid of the Belief of the *one, all-sufficient*, absolutely *complete* Mediation of Christ: Who, being *adequate* to the Office from the Capacity of *both* his Natures, and therefore *expressly appointed* from Heaven, was adequate to the Thoughts of their best Reason, to the Banishment of all past, and Prevention of all future Absurdity.

THE *supreme* Governor of the World, who lays his Commands of Belief in, and gives his Assurances of Mercy from the certain Nature and Fitness of Things, could no more have *appointed* or received to the Office any one of the Mediators their foolish Hearts recommended to him, than he could command the Sun to give Darkness, or Snow and Ice to administer Heat to the World. But in *appointing* Him alone to that most important Office in the World, who is both the Son of his, and the Son of Man's Nature, his Commands and Assurances execute themselves in the several Branches of that Office, to the greatest good of Man, and to the greatest Illustration of the Honour and Attributes of the Divine Majesty; wherever they meet with the common Justice of serious Attention and Consideration on Man's Part, as will afterwards appear.

OUR Author is excessively abusive, as well as ludicrous, in drawing a Parallel, pag. 73, 74, 75. between the Mediators of Heathens, and the Mediation of Christ; making the last rather more absurd than the other. The manifest and most pernicious Intention of which is, to impress upon his Readers, that there is as little, or rather less Grounds for the Belief of one, than there is of the other; and so strike it out of Christianity, and cashier it from all Acceptation. And, pag. 113, 114. he explodes it as one of the *absurd Positives* of Christianity, and makes God arbitrary in requiring it.

BUT how absurd is his Proceeding? How gross are his Misrepresentations and canting Delusions, in dealing that out for *Christianity*, which is professedly and notoriously but a Part of it? Throwing that aside as contemptible, or unwholesome, which is the very declared Foundation, the boasted Glory, the distinguishing Essence, the saving Health and Salvation of it. How like a Quack does he appear in his *Title Page*; where he mounts the Stage, and, with the *Assurance* and *Sufficiency*, mixt with the *Artifice* peculiar to such Persons, prescribes that for the Cure and Medicine of Christianity, which is known to all regular Practitioners, not to be the *curative* Part of it; not to be the Means; not to be the Motives, not to be the Aids, not to be the Helps and Instruments of it?

FOR the Religion of the End, or the Law of Nature being first set to rights and restor'd to its Perfection, the entire *Cure*, the noble *Medicine* for restoring and enabling the *sick, impotent* Nature

ture of Men, to perform and do it, with Satisfaction to themselves, and Acceptance with God (finding in themselves, without that gracious Proffer, neither sufficient Inclination nor Ability for it) consists in the *Means*; and in the Head of all the Means *Christ Jesus*, the *Mediator* between God and Man; what He has done, what He does, and what He is to do, as our *Redeemer*, *Intercessor*, and *Judge*.

Who can believe him, when he tells them to their Faces, that the healing Medicine, (so all the rest of the World call it) is older, and was sooner known than the Disease? He might as well have given out, that *Hippocrates* was as old as the Distempers of Men. Whereas the previous Diseases of the World, *first* made him that great Physician he is recorded to be. And, indeed, it looks as if the Art of healing *bodily* Disorders was the *Gift* of God; being given all *at once*, at least at *one time* of the World; seeing none in so long a Duration pretend to equal him: But all, perhaps to the End of the World, contend, and will contend who shall imitate him nearest in that way. He lived some time before our Saviour; and though his Divine Art is a great *Blessing* and *Benefit* to the World, yet we find it is as far from being *universal*, as is the Gospel. Therefore no more Ground for impeaching the Providence of God in one Case, than in the other. And if there are, and have been more Quacks and Pretenders in that Skill, all the World over, than there are, or have been, counterfeit Revelations from Heaven; there is less Reason for invalidating the *true* Revelation upon that Account, or disrespecting (with our Author) the *Great Physician* of *Souls*. Who had never been known to the World,

if Human Nature, in its moral Part, had not been diseased and disorder'd by the Fall, which was *after* the *Creation*, from doing its Duty. And surely, he is the greatest and truest Physician of *Men*, who by Profession cures both Body and Mind; for is not the Body likewise cured at the final Resurrection to Life, when all other Cures are desperate and impossible?

OR, he might as consistently have asserted, that the *Act* of *Parliament* for discouraging Prophaneness and Immorality, is as *old* as Prophaneness and Immorality. But though the Christian Law is not so old as the Creation, nor the Disobedience of those that occasion'd it; it will be found under the *Offices* of our Mediator to be the most quickning, powerful, vital Law that could be devised by God, or Man, consistent with Man's Liberty of Will; not only for discouraging Prophaneness and Immorality, but for encouraging the sincere Practice of Piety, and all Virtue, which is more than human Laws can pretend to.

AND as our Author set out, so he has blunder'd through innumerable Inconsistencies, apparent to those who are attentive; and to those that are not so (the greatest Part of Readers) he plies the Art of juggling, and Skill of shifting ambiguous Words, as he makes a Shift to pervert them; *Christianity*; *Immutability* of the Relation between God and Man; *Sufficiency* of *Reason*; *Honour* of *God*, and *Good* of *Men*; *Mediation*; *Positives*; the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, with the Airs of Wit and Pleasantry; the better to impose upon superficial unguarded Readers; till he comes to his last concluding Words, *Errare possum*,

possum, Hereticus esse nolo. Which is nothing but laughing in his Sleeve at those he has carried on so far.

FOR, if ever there was a *Heretick* in *Christendom*, he has the Resemblance of such a one. If any one has ever been an *Apostate*, nor holding the Head, *Jesus Christ*, the *Mediator* of Worship¹; or rejected the only *Foundation* of Faith that can be laid² of a Christian's Title to eternal Life; it is *He*. If there is such a Thing as *damnable Heresy*, or *denying the Lord that bought them*, according to *St. Peter*, 2 *Ep.* ii. 1. so entirely subversive of the Christian Faith, that it cannot possibly be the Christian Faith, in such a Heresy or Departure from it, *He* is the guilty Person. *Antichrist* himself may as well excuse himself from being a *Heretick*, or set himself up to be a true Christian, as such a Writer upon Christianity. According to 1 *John* xi. 22. *He is Antichrist, who denieth the Father and the Son*, i. e. God in Christ reconciling the World to himself by the Death of his *Son*, or his being the *Father* and Saviour of the World, by the Mediation of his *Son* sent into the World, for the Salvation and Redemption of it; and whoever denies the *Son* as *sent* from the *Father* for that Purpose, denies the *Father* as well as the *Son*; nor does any come to the *Father*, as *Father*, but by the *Son*; nor is the *Father* glorified as *Father*, but by the *Son*. If any has been *subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself*³; or thought themselves *unworthy of everlasting Life*⁴; Christian Charity itself can hardly forbear suspecting, that it is *He*. Because he falters so very much,

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and

¹ Col. ii. 18, 19.

² 1 Cor. iii. 11.

³ Tit. iii. 11.

⁴ Acts xiii. 46.

and is guilty of so many Contradictions, in this Matter ; a bad Sign of being *self-condemned*.

FOR in Words he owns Christ, but makes no more use of him, than as a *Republisber* of the Law of Nature, and an Example of its Practice ; which is the same Thing in effect, and to the grand Intention of the Gospel, as to disown him : he with a careless Air denies not his Mission from God for the former Purpose ; but takes care to deny and vilify the *End*, the *chief Purpose* of his Mission, and all the Duties resulting from it. He declares ' I dare not say, there is the least ' Difference between the *Law of Nature* and the ' *Gospel* ; for that would suppose some Defect in ' one of them, and reflect upon the Author of ' both.' And almost every where, he receives the Christian Revelation *in part*, and as a *Revelation*, and calls it the *Republication* of his Law of Nature ; he acknowledges the *Goodness*, the *Wisdom* of God, that *that Part* was needful ; he submits also to the *Authority* of God, that *that* was worthy commanding, and *ought* to be obey'd. But as to those Parts, wherein *God*, and *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, place the Love and Goodness, the Wisdom, Power, and Authority of God, and Christ, and the Riches, and the Glory, and the Pre-eminence of the Gospel ; all these he rejects, together with all the *peculiar* Obligations laid upon Christians beyond natural Religion. And by so rejecting, shamefully contradicts himself, and seems to violate his own Conscience.

FOR could his Conscience, little inform'd as it was, ever deny, that if there is Truth in one Part of the Revelation, there must be also in the other ;

other; it must be *wholly* true, as a Revelation, or not at all so. If there is Wisdom, and Authority, Love and Mercy in one Part, he was bound to believe there was likewise the same in the other. Seeing the same Truth, the same Wisdom, the same Authority and Goodness that communicated one, communicated the other. And as they required the one, as the Religion of the End, so did they the other, as the best Religion of the Means for performing that End. Who gave him the Liberty of picking and chusing, that he rejects in the Lump, and discards half at once, nay, I might say, the whole Gospel?

A *Tully's Office* put out by him, with Amendments and Improvements from the Christian Morality, would have serv'd all his Ends and Purposes of the Bible. Was it his own wise Reason that set him upon such unequal Dealing with the Scripture? But that is plainly telling the courteous Reader that he is wiser than God; or else he must be very dull of Apprehension, if he does not perceive that to be his Meaning: Or, was it his own Authority, being by Profession a *Civilian*, that instigated him thus to the repealing the Law of Christ? But, he ought to have considered the Nature of *Obligation* better, in that Case; that the Repeal must derive from as high Authority as that which first made the Law; and it is to be hoped that even our Author's Disciples are, or ought to be of Opinion, that his Authority in *rescinding* is not quite so great as God's for establishing, or that it indispensibly requires his Consent and Concurrence for establishing the Jurisdiction of his Maker; notwithstanding he has so often

taken upon him to condemn as *needless, useless, absurd, and arbitrary*, what God in Christ has been pleas'd very positively to enjoin his erring and straying Creatures, for their Good, as well as for his own Honour and Glory.



CH A P. IX.

The Offices of the MEDIATOR.

THE Foundation being laid in *Nature*, in the preceding *Chap.* I proceed to the Offices of our Mediator, which could have been of no Use or *Satisfaction* either to God or Man, if he had not been in the proper *Capacity* with respect to both. Now the Business or Function of a Mediator being to reconcile both the Parties at difference, each to the other, must consist in these Particulars.

1. That the Proposal or Proposition for a Reconciliation should be an acceptable and desirable Thing, as soon as known, to both Parties at variance. With respect to God; He made the Stoop, and condescended to take the first Step. The Scheme was laid and approved between him and his only begotten Son, *the Lamb slain by determin'd Counsel, from the Foundation of the World*: In order to shew his sole Power and Prerogative of bringing the greatest Good out
of

of Man's Evil; and to display before all intelligent Creatures, the infinite Riches and Exuberance of his Goodness, in a new Scene, beyond any thing observable in the Creation of the World.

FOR that Display of his Goodness, called *Mercy*, had never been known to Man, or Angel, if the Object of it, the Fall of Man, had not presented. And it is in reality a greater Instance of Goodness, to place such a mutable Creature as Man, in a *Capacity* of retrieving himself from Misery to *more exalted* Happiness, (as is the Case of the Method of Redemption) than first to place him in a *Capacity* of continuing himself in an *inferior* Happiness, as was that of Paradise.

FOR the Covenant of Obedience there, was established upon the Sanction of Death, and its *Relative* Continuance of Life in *Paradise*; but there was no *Promise* made, no manner of *Right* given to *eternal Life* in *Heaven*. Therefore St. Paul speaking of the manifold Advantages of the *second* Covenant above the first, brings in for one Instance, *The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God* [free from any Claim, Right, or Merit on Man's Part] *is eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. 23.* Paradise is not the Heaven, where the Souls of just Men made perfect [by a re-union to their Resurrection-Body] is to be glorified in, but an *intermediate* State of Happiness for the Soul after Death, inferior to Heaven; to which our Saviour himself pass'd, before he went for good and all to the right Hand of God. And therefore it was, That God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son,

Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but *have everlasting Life*, John iii. 16. By the new Covenant we were adopted, as one of the Antients expresses it, *εἰς καινότητα αἰῶνος*, to the *Newness* of eternal Life, as a *new Thing*.

WITH respect to Man; the Acceptableness and Desirableness of such an Overture, was to be laid before his Reason for his Approbation and Consent, reflecting upon his own great Need of it; the Accusations of his own Conscience in offending God, and its just Fears of his Displeasure: That he is become *alienated, an Enemy to him in his own Mind by his own wicked Works*, Col. i. 21. That he is an Apostate from his Duty, and if he had a Mind to be otherwise, he finds those Difficulties and Discouragements from the conscious Pravity of his Nature, that he cannot exactly perform the Law of his Nature. And reflecting again upon the Terms of this Proposal, its Deliverances, its Promises, its Advantages every Way, he must be lost to the intended Use of Reason, if he closes not with it.

2. THE Disposition to be reconciled after such a Proposal must be *reciprocal* in both Parties. God's Disposition to Peace, and Propitiation, is sufficiently conspicuous, by first sending his Son, and then to prove his *actual* Reconcilement upon Terms easy to Man's Performance; gave the greatest Demonstration of it the World could possible receive, by requiring *his* Obedience unto Death in *our* Nature and Stead; a *Propitiation* so valuable, and so awful, that it ought not to fail of making them infallibly certain, that he had no more Displeasure against them; and being ascertain'd of that, the more afraid to of-

send him. Man's *Disposition* is still to be cultivated, intreated, and beseech'd in Christ's stead, by the *Ministers* of his Word, to the Consummation of all Things.

3. THE State, Condition, and Circumstances of both Parties, must be consider'd ; what is fit, right, and meet for each to do, God as well as Man ; in order to an Accommodation.

4. An actual Negotiation of the Matter between both Parties in an impartial Manner.

5. THE proper Manner and Method that each is to be dealt with ; considering Man as a free, intelligent Agent ; and God as a Governor.

THERE was two Parts then incumbent upon our Mediator. The *first* was, for reconciling Man to God : In order to which, he came down from Heaven a *Plenipotentiary* from GOD, and began that Part upon Earth in his *Prophetick Office*, and carries it on in Heaven, as *Advocate, King, Judge*. The *second* Part, viz. in his *Priestly Office*, was to atone, make Peace with, or, which is the very same Thing in other Words, reconciling God to Man. And that was accomplished on Earth, in the Sacrifice of himself, and ever since carry'd on in Heaven, by Way of Memorial there and Intercession for us ; where he sits at the Right-hand of God, a *Plenipotentiary*, or *complete Mediator*, between God and Man, for effecting a thorough Reconciliation and mutual Friendship between both.

THE first Task upon our Mediator was to reconcile Man to God ; in order to which he came

came down from Heaven a *Plenipotentiary* from God, that *Palladium*, that *Emanuel*, God with us, to begin the Negotiation with Man. And therefore it is said, it pleased the Father that in him *all Fulness should dwell*, and the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily*: Which was, when his only begotten Son descended from the Bosom of his Father, and assumed our Nature, and Body, being Son of Man, as he was before Son of God, *all Fulness, i. e. of Divine, as well as Human Nature dwelt in him*. And as God was compleat and full in him, so we are said to be *compleat in him*. And this Idea of a Mediator fills and compleats the Sense of Scripture, and brings in Harmony to all the Parts.

WHEN God and Man become united in one Person, what can be a more auspicious Sign of a future Reconciliation to his straying Creature Man? Or a more intimate Token of Friendship? And through that *Vinculum dei & hominis*, having Fellowship with the Son of Man united to the Son of God, we are said to have *Fellowship with the Father, to be one with God, and God with us*: And being thus united in *natural* Brotherhood to him, who is Son of God by *Nature*, we have a Security from *Nature*, (transcending the Relation of common Creatures to their Creator) as well as from Adoption, of that surpassing Love, Privilege, and Intimacy of being called the *Sons of God*; who is our *Father* in Christ by *Relation*, as well as Adoption; and that *Christian* Idea of the FATHER is the highest Idea of Father that can be exhibited. And if the covenanted Relation to God is thus firmly grounded upon the *natural* Relation, how unnatural, and unkind to themselves are the Rejectors of Christianity? And

And when we cultivate the *Spirit of Christ* shed upon baptized Christians abundantly, we are doubly *one with Christ*, in *Flesh*, and in *Spirit*: And through him *related*, as well as *adopted Sons of God, Heirs, and Joint-Heirs with Christ*. It being previously necessary, as is known to all the World, that all Adoption must be founded in *Sameness of Nature*; but to qualify us for that, we are first to be *translated out of the Kingdom of Darkness, into the Kingdom of his dear Son*. The *Understandings of Men by Nature were darken'd, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness of their Hearts*, *Eph. iv. 2.*

By his Son's teaching us, the whole Will of God was fulfill'd, his being the *prime Apostle of our Profession*, in those *last Days*, when *God spake to us by his Son*, as that *PROPHET* importing Teacher as well as Foreteller, who was to come into the World, and that *Christ*, who, when he came, was to *teach all Things*. He was foretold to be a *Prophet* like unto *Moses*; a *King* like *David*, sitting upon the Throne of *Israel*; and a *Priest* after the Order of *Melchizedek*. For as soon as God proffer'd the Readiness of his Disposition to be reconciled, and the Bowels of his Mercy to shew wanted Favour, in the Profusion of his Offers; it was necessary in all Decorum, that the *inferior Party*, Man, a Fugitive from God and Duty, should stop, and turn about, especially when overtaken by God; and hearken what he had to say to him, and immediately set about what he bid him do, to cease his Enmity, and be reconciled to him, and his own Happiness: Without which, it was impossible that the holy God either could, or would be any farther reconciled to him. For Repentance
must

must go before Prayer ; and if the Prodigal Son had not begun to return, the Father had not gone out to have met him.

AND because through manifold Sins and Iniquities he had lost the Light of the Path he shou'd walk in, and by the Perverseness of his Ways (both *Jews* and *Gentiles*) had wilfully corrupted the Rule of Duty, and brought it down to the Measures and Inclinations of their own wretched Obedience ; it was previously necessary for the heavenly Instructor to give them both an *entire* Rule of the whole Duty of Man ; that they might the better afterwards know the Number, and Heinousness of Transgressions, and endeavour to mend for the Time to come. Knowledge of Sin must go before perfect Repentance ; and Knowledge of the Religion of the End, and of the Means, must likewise precede the due Observance of either of them.

Mr. LOCK very well observes, ' That natural Religion in its full Extent, was no where as he knew of, taken Care of by the Force of natural Reason ; that it is too hard a Thing for unassisted Reason, to establish Morality in all its Parts upon its Foundations, with a clear and convincing Light : And it is at least a surer and shorter Way, to the Apprehensions of the Vulgar, and Mass of Mankind, that one manifestly sent from God, and coming with visible Authority from him, should, as a King and Lawmaker, tell them their Duties ; and require their Obedience ; than leave it to the long, and sometimes intricate Deductions of Reason, to be made out to them : Which the greatest Part of

Reasonableness of Christian. pag. 265, 266.

‘ of Mankind have neither Leisure to weigh,
 ‘ nor thro’ Want of Education, Use, and Skill to
 ‘ judge of. We see how unsuccessful in this, the
 ‘ Attempts of Philosophers were before our Sa-
 ‘ viour’s Time. How short their several Systems
 ‘ came of the Perfection of a true and compleat
 ‘ *Morality* is very visible.’

WHILST on Earth he had many Things to communicate to his Apostles, which they were not able to bear, and therefore after his Ascension, sent the *Holy Ghost* to inspire them with whatever was, or could be occasionally wanting to the End of the World, and bring all Things to their Remembrance, of his Life, and Doctrine; and commit it to Writing, as the unchangeable Standard of Truth, and Charter of Salvation, to all Ages, and Nations, where it shall appear.

THEREIN is a compleat Rule of Life and Manners, and a Treasure of the Knowledge of God, and Ourselves, as far as is necessary in this Life; without the least Affectation of those Arts of disputing, *pro* and *con*, upon every Subject, so highly admired among the *Greeks* for *Wisdom*; with a seasonable Design not to amuse the Understanding, but to influence and convert the Will by the Plainness and Simplicity of Doctrine; therefore designedly void of those Rules and Criticisms of Method, or artificial Eloquence of *enticing Words of Mens Wisdom*, wherewith the Philosophers universally study’d to illuminate and embellish their, for the most Part, vain-glorious Composures about uncertain controverted Things. Though that Observation is always true, *simplex & nuda veritas est luculentior; quia satis ornata per se &c. adeoq; ornamentis extrinsecus additis fucata corrumpitur:*

corrumpitur: mendacium vero specie placet aliena.
 Lact. But the Negotiation, Importance, and Majesty of the Things it discovers, passing by such *human* Assistance, in addressing to Men, thereby engaged and secured the Thing intended, viz. the Perusal of the *Whole*; that the heavenly Doctrine might be insensibly imbib'd; and that Man's Reason might make the better Construction, by the Rule of *Proportion*, comparing *spiritual Things with Spiritual*, of any, and every Part of the whole.

WHILST it left human Eloquence, which naturally arises from the Warmth of Affections truly touch'd with such affecting Subjects, to kindle at the most *beautiful* Simplicity in relating Matters of Fact; at the noble *rappin* or *Intrepidity* of Truth; at the adorable *Sublimity* of the most Divine Things in their wonderful Habitude and Respects to us; at the inspiring *Pathetick* of the Goodness and Mercy of God, in the Redemption of the World, and the Forbearance of Sinners: And when the Fire is kindled, to speak with the Tongue, and affect their Neighbours with the same; who, through Thoughtlessness and worldly Affairs, are little affected with it; and sometimes become the Pen of a ready Writer, for that Purpose.

So far is the Gospel from lessening or relaxing the moral Law of Nature, which was fallen into Desuetude, and had lost its Direction, through the corrupt Doctrines, and vicious Practices of *Jews and Gentiles*; that its profess'd Design is to fulfil and establish, confirm and strengthen it; by clearing it of Error, improving the Sense, and extending the Obligations to the Thoughts
 and

and inward Parts, the principal Agent in Morality. Our Lord *fill'd up* (as in the Original) and restor'd the true Meaning which was stolen away by the *Scribes*, and secreted by the *Pharisees*. Whatever the Light of Nature discovers to be true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good Report, if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise, it obliges, *Phil. iv. 8.* to cultivate, and think of those Things.

AND as it would have *all* Degrees of Men to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, it comprehends all Sorts under its Obedience, from the highest to the lowest. It was a great Defect in the Philosophers, proceeding from a supercilious Contempt, accounting them *Prophane*, that they never adapted their moral Reasonings, or Instructions to the *Commonalty*, but to the Learned only; so that they, who most needed Instruction, went without it. But in the Gospel, according to Mr. *Lock's* Judgment, 'All the Duties of Morality lie clear and plain, and easy to be understood. And here I appeal, whether this be not the surest, the safest, and most effectual Way of teaching; especially if we add this farther Consideration; that as it suits the lowest Capacities of reasonable Creatures, so it reaches and satisfies, nay, enlightens the highest, and the most elevated Understandings cannot but submit to the Authority of this Doctrine as Divine'.

FOR the Gospel, moreover, refers the Obedience of every one, to the *Authority* of God commanding it; placing it to his Account as the Inspector and Rewarder. And this gives the

¹ *Reasonableness of Christian. pag. 281.*

the controuling Advantage to Christianity beyond all the teaching of Philosophy, according to that of *Lanctant. De falsa sapient. cap. 26. Nemo igitur credit; quia tam se hominem putat esse, qui audit; quam est ille, qui præcipit:* and it may be added, *non vox hominis sonat.* ‘Did the Saying of *Aristippus*, or *Confutius*, give it an Authority? Was *Zeno* a Lawgiver to Mankind? If not, what he or any other Philosopher deliver’d, was but a Saying of his, Mankind might hearken to it, or reject it, as they pleased.’ *Lock’s Reasonablen. of Christian. p. 269.* ‘The Rules of Morality were in different Countries and Sects different. And natural Reason no where had, nor was like to cure the Defects and Errors in them,’ *pag. 175.* Always remembering, that for every wilful Disobedience, without Repentance, he will call us to a severe Account in the Life after this.

AND that every one might have the Test of the Sincerity and good Conscience of his own Obedience, and consequently of his Hopes and Fears hereafter, in the keeping of his own Breast, he is acquainted, that *whoever keepeth the whole Law, yet offendeth in one Point, is guilty of all; Jam. ii. 10.* That if he has retrenched his Inclination to all Sin, save one, and that one as dear as an *Eye*, or a *Right-hand*, it must be parted with. If he indulges himself in the Commission of any one known Sin, or Omission of a plain Duty, he cannot be a sincere Servant of God ‘till he has Respect unto *all* his Commandments; because the Authority stamp’d upon all equally, is disobeyed in offending, with respect to any one of them, no one is allowed to pick and chuse their Duty, and set up a Religion for themselves; but

but to take and observe it, as they find it in his holy Word prescribed, and required by God, the Author of their Lives, the Giver of their Faculties and all their Opportunities, and the Sovereign of their Conscience.

THE Virtue and Necessity of universal Obedience is obvious, not only because nothing else than the Avoidance of all known Sin, and the Practice of all known Duty is, or ought to be called *true Virtue*; but because nothing less is a true *Qualification* (all and every the Commandments and Prohibitions being Directions for perfecting that Qualification) for relishing and enjoying the Happiness of a future State. For as we are sociable Creatures, and Worshippers of God in this Life, so shall we be in the next: And therefore the previous weaning the Love and Affections of the Soul, by Temperance in all Things, from what is not to be had in that State; and a Delight in the Sociable; and likewise in the Divine Virtues of loving, thanking, trusting, and depending upon God; or, in other Words, a *sober, righteous, and godly Life*, are all necessary to go along with us. This explains that fine Sentiment of the *Roman Orator*, though to himself obscure, *est virtus nihil aliud quam in se perfecta, & ad summum perducta natura*.

THIS makes it truly what it is, *Religion* from Heaven, and to Heaven in Prospect, awful, binding, and yet most comfortable; and gives it the Force and Power of the *Law of God* over all its Subjects; which is a sensible authoritative Obligation, vastly superior to the faint Obligations deducible from the Fitness of Things to the

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Good of the Whole, or the Relation of Persons, and Things, to one another ; which are understood but by few : Therefore our Author chose to derive his Religion from that Source, to confound and weaken the settled Religion of as many as he could ; which is as kind, as to send them to seek and prefer what, by much thinking, may be perceived by the Light of a Lanthorn, before that, which at the same Time, is actually discover'd by the Light of the Sun, at Noon-day. For it is the Glory of Christianity to give Light to them that sit in Darknefs, and actually lose their Way whilst they boast of the Light of Nature. It enlightens the Understanding of all Degrees, and Ages of Mankind, as soon as they arrive at the Use of Reason ; and improves and cultivates their rational Faculties in the most desirable of all Knowledge, the Things of Religion, the peculiar Things of its Province. By shewing God to us in a clearer and more affecting Light of those Attributes and Perfections which relate to us as Creator, and Governor, Comptroller and Judge, Preserver and Lover of Men, than Philosophy was able to recommend ; and shewing us ourselves to ourselves, how continually we depend upon him, for what we are, and for all we have received : our minutest Affairs being at no Time beneath his Care, and our great Concern in securing his Favour, by our own Care, always the Object of his particular Blessing and Assistance : it shews us from whence we are fallen ; what is the Recovery, and what is the Exaltation of our Nature ; how ignorant we are of ourselves wherein our Happiness consists ; how it would redeem us from the Cheat we would, if let alone, put upon ourselves, from the forewarned Deceitfulness of Sin, and Love of Temptation, from

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wronging

wronging ourselves of our high Reward ; it truly informs us how cold, and unconstant we are in that Pursuit.

No wonder Philosophers were divided and subdivided into endless Variety of Opinions, and all of them mistaken, about Man's Happiness, when the great Duration of his Being, in a future State, was left out of the Account : The perfect Law of Liberty informs us, how far we must ever be from Happiness, as long as we go on in the wilful Custom of Sin. And what they were unhappily ignorant of, lamenting the Want of an *Instructor*, (being unable to reconcile their natural Notions of the Justice, and the Goodness of God to their guilty Minds) in *what Manner* we are to apply for the Peace of Conscience, and to be sure of obtaining Remission of Sins, the Favour of a reconciled God, and an acceptable Welcome, and a filial Freedom to worship and endeavour to serve him better, as our heavenly Father, and best Friend.

AND whilst we pretend not to throw off all Worship of him, nor the Thoughts of getting us Pardon for our Sins, it further acquaints us, what Opinions of Men God dislikes, and resists most in his gracious Methods of revealing himself for the speedier and more effectual Advancement of our Happiness. They are of two Sorts ; one is *Hypocrisy*, the formal outside Religion, and that too in Conformity but to some Duties, of *Pharisees* ; for there are, and ever will be such in Christianity ; against which, our Lord sets himself with a particular Odium and Condemnation, as being not only the Disappointment, but the utter Subversion of his Religion, after it is acknowledged,

knowledge, and where-ever it is received. The other is of those, who, out of a vain Self-flattering Conceit of the SUFFICIENCY of their own Reason, and Righteousness, (I wish it never was the Case of Deists) arrogantly imagine, they stand in no Need of Repentance ; or, which is the same Thing, no revealed Methods from Heaven ; no Redeemer to bring them to it, or offer them Health and Salvation. Against such righteous as these, such whole *in their own Conceit*, (however our Author has accumulated his Contempt by burlesquing it, *pag. 41.*) our Lord declares, he came not to call *them* to Repentance, or offer himself a Physician ; but only to such Sinners as were *sensible* of their Disease, and weary'd with the Burthen of their Sins, so sensible of their own Insufficiency and continual Dependence upon God, as to think his Providence both in Temporals and Spirituals, to be more to them towards their prospering in either, than their own mere Endeavours.

WHILST the opposite Temper is precluded, because it precludes Instruction even from God himself, and resists the true Purposes of his Revelation, and will have none of his Ways ; but, in their Turn, will they find the Fate of being resisted by him, with that Abasement which is meet for so much Pride and Contumacy, of all its Frailties the least becoming human Nature, which should live and breathe in the Dependence of a Creature to his Creator, and a Servant to his Lord, and the most miserable Case in any Patient for the Son of God himself to cure ; it is really the only contemptible Disease in Man that is born of a Woman, as well as the most insensible of its dangerous Condition. The old Philosophers

losophers bore their Faculties with Modesty, and enjoy'd their Reason with Desires of improving it ; but our modern Despires, whilst they adorn and brighten their Reason by what they borrow from Revelation, ungratefully condemn its main Design upon them.

‘ How short their several Systems [of Philosophers] came of the Perfection of a true and compleat *Morality* is very yisible. And if, since that the Christian Philosophers have much out-done them, yet we may observe, that the first Knowledge of the Truths they have added, are owing to Revelation : Though as soon as they are heard and consider'd, they are found to be agreeable to Reason ; and such as can by no Means be contradicted. Every one may observe a great many Truths which he receives at first from others, and readily assents to, as consonant to Reason, which he would have found it hard, and, perhaps, beyond his Strength to have discover'd himself. Native and original Truth is not so easily wrought out of the Mine, as we who have it deliver'd, ready dug and fashion'd, into our Hands, are apt to imagine.’ *Lock's Reasonableness of Christian.* pag. 266. ‘ Many are beholden to Revelation, who don't acknowledge it,’ pag. 278. If they make the Son of God an *Impostor*, they are guilty of the Sin against the *Holy Ghost* ; and if they say, there was no need of his coming to be a Propitiation for our Sins, they make God a Liar ; and either Way they despise and perish.

As Man is a sociable Creature, Christianity improves all *Human* Virtues ; securing the good Order of Society, in every Member, upon the

surest and most lasting Principles, of not only an honorary, but a *conscientious* publick Spirit, as doing their respective Duties to God, rather than unto Men.

THE publick Spirit and Love of Country, which so remarkably animated some Heathen Nations, was full of Injury to other Countries round about, and set them upon conquering and enslaving innocent Neighbours, who design'd them no Wrong; but the Christian Spirit enlarged the narrow Bounds of that Benevolence to *all* Mankind, to respect and serve the most distant Person upon Earth, as a Fellow Citizen, or next Door Neighbour, if he happen'd to want our Help, and we in Ability to assist.

AND as to the Passions that may be injurious to ourselves, or to any Body else, Christianity is so far from letting them loose to Words, or Actions, that it chains them within the Boundaries of the Thoughts, and suppresses them there.

IN short, it purifies the Heart as well as enlightens the Understanding; sanctifies Affliction; and when it is for the Sake of a good Conscience, the after Prospect turns it into Joy; removes the Sting of Death, unknown to the Heathen to be the Wages of Sin; gives Joy of Mind and Peace of Conscience in the Sense of God's Favour; rectitude to our whole Behaviour; and Heaven at the End of our Days; every one of which were Strangers to the Schools of Philosophers; nor could they promise, much less secure, one of them to their Votaries. It delivers from the greatest Evils, as Slavery and Dominion of Sin, of Passion, and the Devil; the Dread of God's Anger,

Anger, and the fearful Expectations and Punishments of a future Life, and in the room of them introduces and enstates in the contrary Enjoyments.

THE invaluable Design of its Faith and Doctrines, its Means, its Precepts and Prohibitions, its Promises and Threats, with all its other Motives, its Examples, its internal Aids, and its external Helps and Instruments, are all, and severally, to improve us in Goodness here, in order to qualify us for greater Happiness hereafter. Whoever would see 'the true Gospel-Morality' carry'd to higher Degrees of Purity and Perfection, than had been practis'd before either by 'Jew or Gentile; and how the Relations among Men, and the Duties belonging to them, center in God, and the Offices of this Life are connected with the Happiness of the next — FROM the *Sanctions* of Duty, which the Civil Relations among Men have received from God. — FROM the Manner of *God's* Dealings with Men. — FROM the Example of *Christ* our Lord and Master. — FROM the Regard we owe to our *Holy Profession*. — FROM the Relation we bear to *Heaven* while we live upon Earth. — FROM the different *Sources* of Moral and Immoral Actions. — FROM the Influence which our Regard and Disregard to the Duties of Morality will have upon our *future State*' ; let them consult.

AND is not this universal Rule of the Religion of the End, and of the Means, for regulating our Lives and Conversation in this World,

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this

¹ The *Bishop of London's 2 Past. pag. 68, &c.* where they will find it drawn up with great Judgment, as well as Brevity. See also *pag. 4, &c.*

this Word of God, legible, intelligible, also, as it is by all, familiarly deliver'd to us, by the Son of God in our Likeness, stamp'd by the Authority of Miracles, by Authority also of his own Example living up to the Rules he gave; incomparably preferable to our Author's Religion of Nature, drawn from the Consideration of what makes for the Good of the Whole, and the Relations we stand in to God, and one another?

HE says, ' 'Tis the Reason or Fitness of the Thing, that makes it a Divine Law; and consequently, that they who never heard of any external Revelation, yet if they knew from the Nature of Things, what is fit for them to do, they know all that God will, or can require of them; since his Commands are to be measure'd by the antecedent Fitness of Things; and Things can only be said to be fit, or unfit, but as they are for, or against the common Good.' *If they knew from the Nature of Things, what is fit for them to do, &c. i. e. if they know the Will of God, they know it; if the Sun shines, it shines. Things can only be said to be fit, or unfit, but as they are for, or against the common Good.* But how shall the Generality know what makes most for, or against the common Good? Shall they be sent to the common Field of Nature, to glean it up there? or turn Patriots and Politicians in the Government of their Country, or Universalists in the universal Government of intelligent Beings, in order to live sober, righteous, and godly Lives in their private Sphere?

AGAIN, ' If the Creator will do every Thing, the Relation he stands in to his Creatures makes it

‘ it fit for him to do ; and expects nothing from
 ‘ them, but what the Relation they stand in to
 ‘ him, and one another, makes likewise fit for
 ‘ them to do, how can they be ignorant of their
 ‘ Duty?’ I answer, very easily in the present
 Degeneracy of human Nature; as is but too true
 in Experience in the Heathen World, antient
 and modern. Studious Persons of exalted Minds
 do well in enquiring into the *verbal* Commands of
 the Author of Nature, by the natural *Fitness of*
Things; and the more they enquire, the more
 Wisdom they will be sure to discover in laying
 his external Commands in the internal Nature
 and Fitness of Things: And when they find it
 out, and say, he that runs may read, and that
 it is as distinguishable as Colours to the Eye, and
 Sounds to the Ear, they hope, that every body
 else will see with *their* Eyes.

BUT with our Author to supersede external
 Revelation and rely upon *internal*, is to prefer
 Darkeness to Light, or the Light of the Stars to
 that of the Sun; and to remit the Bulk of Man-
 kind to the Light of Nature, in order to find
 out the Law of Morals, is to suppose them all
 Philosophers; both having a Capacity, and also
 Leisure for making such Discoveries. Whereas,
 upon all Occasions of Duty, *thus and thus it is*
written, is to them, and all the World, more di-
 rectory and useful, and at hand, than *thus and*
thus it may be proved by a long Train of Rea-
 soning.

AND therefore the Light of Reason in our
 Author's Way of recommending it before Reve-
 lation, is so far from being an *absolutely perfect*
 Rule, that it is, and ever will be, a very imper-
 fect

fect one of itself; nor would a Collection out of all the Philosophers put together, amount to any thing near such a Rule; so far from being *all-sufficient* and *infallible*, that, where there is a Revelation truly attested to come from God, to depend upon it exclusive of this last, is most certain Deceit, and the horrible Danger of being given up to strong Delusion, to believe a Lye.

It is the Remark of the unprejudic'd Mr. Lock, 'Whatever was the Cause, 'tis plain in Fact, Human Reason unassisted, fail'd Men in its great and proper Business of *Morality*. It never from unquestionable Principles by their Deductions, made out an entire Body of the *Law of Nature*. And he that shall collect all the moral Rules of the Philosophers, and compare them with those contain'd in the New Testament, will find them to come short of the *Morality* deliver'd by our *Saviour*, and taught by his *Apostles*; a College made up for the most part of ignorant, but inspired Fishermen.'

BUT under this deliberate setting up natural Religion, in Opposition to reveal'd, there seems to be this Mystery of Iniquity industriously conceal'd and cherish'd: That whereas Christianity is strict in requiring all Regularity of Manners sincerely consistent with the Frailty of our Nature, and severe in threatening future Punishment; whilst the other is free from any *positive* Sanction of Punishment in the Life after this; and at the same time not so express and particular in exacting Duty, or restraining the irregular Desires of corrupt Nature: It is not to be wonder'd

Reasonableness of Christianity, pag. 267, 268.

der'd at, if the sensual Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, or Truth, should be prejudiced in Favour of the latter: If they find out any Gloss of Reason, how fallacious soever, to recommend it, they naturally espouse what sits so light and easy upon their Minds; and take refuge under a Religion which seems to give some Liberty to pick and chuse their Obedience, and not call them to account for some Irregularities, neither here, nor hereafter.

THAT our Author in particular has *secret* Objections against Revelation, drawn from another Source than Reason, is demonstrable: Because, when the Light of Reason is to find out his Law of Nature from the more obscure Nature of Things, then it is bright and perspicuous, absolutely perfect and all-sufficient; but when it comes to read the more intelligible Word of God, all of a sudden it has lost its Discernment, and can understand little or nothing of Obligation; it is all over figurative, allegorical, and as obscure, unintelligible, and useless as the *Papists* would make it, and for the same End, *viz.* the better to carry on an *Imposture* that must not be brought in Sight, because it would immediately disappear like Darknefs before the Light of the *Holy Scripture*; and, perhaps, is at the Bottom one and the same.

As he has made great Use of a Citation out of Dr. *Prideaux's* Letter to the *Deists*, I would present his Admirers with one from the same Letter, pag. 107. 'The *Papists*, who next to ' *Mahomet*, have the greatest Claim to *Imposture*, as to those Errors which they teach, ' very well understand how such a Cause is to be ' served

‘ served by both these Particulars, [mentioned
 ‘ before, with respect to the People he made
 ‘ choice of to propagate his Imposture: 1. Be-
 ‘ cause of the Indifferency they were grown to
 ‘ as to any *Religion* at all: 2 Because of the great
 ‘ Ignorance they were in] and therefore make it
 ‘ their Business, as much as they can, to keep
 ‘ their own People in Ignorance, and pervert
 ‘ all those they call *Hereticks*, to *Atheism*, and
 ‘ *Infidelity*, that so having no Religion at all,
 ‘ they may be the better prepared again to re-
 ‘ ceive theirs.’

HAD he treated the *Laws* of God and his Co-
 venant with Man, with the common *civil Inter-*
pretation, which his own Profession suggested
 to be due to it, he would have made good Sense
 of both. Or had he allow’d Christian People to
 make use of their common Reason without that
 Help, they can’t fail to read, mark, learn, and
 inwardly digest what is necessary to make wise
 unto Salvation; and every thing else that is re-
 quir’d of their several Capacities to make them
 wise and good in their Station of Life. Let them
 attend to that wise Direction of the *Homily* of the
 Church, ‘ That there is nothing spoken in dark
 ‘ Mysteries in one Place, but the same is more
 ‘ familiarly and plainly taught to the Capacity
 ‘ both of the Learned, and Unlearned, in other
 ‘ Places; and those Things in the Scripture
 ‘ which are plain to understand, and necessary
 ‘ to Salvation, every Man’s Duty is to learn
 ‘ them.’

THIS

‘ *Puffend.* Law of Nature and Nations, L. V. Ch. 12.
 of Interpretation. And *Grot.* de jure B. L. II. Ch. 16.

THIS single Rule duly observ'd is of the most important Service for distinguishing all useful Truth, from what is either doubtful, or false in Religion. For Instance, plain Scripture, as well as plain Reason assures us, that God is a *Spirit*: How presently then does our Author's impertinent Harangue vanish, about the Scriptures ascribing Human Parts and Passions to him? It is one of the best Preservatives for preventing People being tossed to and fro with divers Winds of Doctrine, and keeping them safe from the Snares of those who lie in wait to deceive. Nay, a good Proficiency in the Scriptures, in distinguishing the plain Places from the figurative, and laying the proper Strefs accordingly upon them, would prevent them from being either *unstable*, or *unlearned*, and consequently secure them from the Danger of wresting any Scripture to their own Destruction. For who were the unlearned in *St. Peter's Time*, and *Meaning*, but they who were unlearned *in the Scripture*, by not studying it, and comparing Place with Place? As to human Learning, *St. Peter* himself was unskill'd, and therefore could endanger nobody by the same Incapacity of himself. By this Rule, the *some Things hard to be understood*, would lessen more and more, and either be superseded or master'd by the many that are plain, or left as a Matter of Leisure and Curiosity, more than any real Use.

AND as the Distinction of the Religion of the END, and the Religion of the MEANS is solidly grounded in the Nature of Things, and makes every thing we can turn our Thoughts upon in the Christian Religion, fall into Subordination

ordination and Subserviency one to another, and gives the Estimate and Precedence of one Thing before another; as also the Need of one Thing to another; it is of singular Service and Benefit in regulating our Reason and Judgment in the *Search of Scripture*, because it has respect unto all God's Commandments, and shews us the Wisdom, and the real Use of every one of them.

It has been shewn before, how much the Christian Religion has confirm'd and strengthen'd, improved and perfected the Religion of the End, or the Religion of Nature as its Scope and Purpose, in the three Branches of Duty, to God, our Neighbour, and Ourselves. And the Improvements it has made, with respect to each of these, will receive an easy Interpretation from the common PRUDENCE it previously supposes to accompany every Man's Conduct, who would keep a good Conscience towards God, and also towards Men, as a Member of Society; and as he is also a Candidate for Heaven, and would have a good Hope there.

AND, as Virtue is required by the Apostle to be added with all Diligence to Faith, or the general Knowledge of Christianity, as its End; so this Prudence, or particular *Knowledge*, as he calls it, is commanded to be added to Virtue, as the true Discerner what is real Virtue in the various changing Circumstances and Relations it may be placed under, in this shifting Scene¹. And this *prudential Knowledge* in distinguishing Things and Circumstances, is supposed to be improving from the *Exercise* of the Sentiments of the Mind, in *discerning Good and Evil*², what is less, what

¹ 2 Pet. i. 5.

² Heb. v. 14.

what is more, and what is most useful and plain in Doctrine and Instruction; and consequently will prefer to learn our Lord's own Words and Example, from the four *Gospels*; the Success, chief Heads, and Miracles attending the Gospel in the *Acts*; the consequent Mistakes and Disputes about every material Part of it occasionally clear'd and set to Rights, and made the more stedfast, from preceding Doubts, and with very many Reproofs, Corrections, and additional Directions, squared to the Rule of Truth, and Intention of the Gospel; he will read and learn in the *Epistles*: From the *Psalms* Devotion; from *Job*, Patience; from *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, both the Value, and the Rules of Conduct of civil Life; and in the *Historical* Books of the *Old Testament*, in Connexion with the *New*, he will trace out and adore the wonderful Works of God, in his Providence, foreseeing, directing, and adjusting all Things to the great Affair of Man's Redemption.

1. As we would keep a good Conscience towards GOD; when an Action is forbidden, all the Tendencies in Thought, and ill Appearances in Fact, of that Action are to be forborn. For Instance, we are forbidden Murther, Adultery, therefore we are to indulge nothing of that Tendency in our Thoughts; we are not to forswear ourselves upon the solemn Occasions that Oaths are required, for an End of all Strife; therefore required in order to prevent that, and preserve a due Regard for the Name of God, *not to swear at all* in our *common* Conversation: If a Duty is required, the Opportunities for performing it are to be embraced; always remembering, that every

every positive Injunction implies a Prohibition of the contrary Vices and Hindrances.

MEMBERS of SOCIETY ought to preserve a good Conscience towards Men; and as the Laws of every particular Society, are the Measures of Obedience approved by God as his own Ordinance to that Society, the Commands of Princes, and those put in Authority under them, of Masters, Parents, and other Superiors, are to be observ'd in *all Things* agreeable to *those Laws*, which are the Measure of the *publick* Good: For where absolute Power, and not Law, rules, there is no *publick*. This explains Subjects, Servants, Children's obeying in *all Things*. And as the Preservation of ourselves and Families, the main End of Society, is the Measure of Kindness and Beneficence to others; that explains the *lending, hoping for nothing again, and the giving to everyone that asks of us*. And as the Preservation of Society is the Measure and Valuation of all the Injuries any private Person can receive in Name, Body, or Goods; that explains the Meaning, and sets the true Bounds of *loving Enemies*, and of *him that takes away thy Goods, ask them not again*; and shews when we are at Liberty to vindicate our Wrongs, and to forbear, or make use of Law, just as the Occasion is frivolous or tolerable, grievous and intolerable. If of this latter Sort; the Execution of the Law is one Instance of doing Good to those that hate us, as well as doing Good to the Society: And besides praying for such an Enemy, we may do as many Kindnesses as Prudence shall advise for the speedier Conquest of him, in case he is of a generous Nature. For the Law of Love and Benevolence which such an Enemy violates,

is

is never the less in its full Force, with respect to our Obedience to it, and we ought, not only to wish, but promote his true Good, as we have Opportunity, as well out of Hopes of reducing him to his Duty, as out of Concern, lest we be found wanting in our own. One Way or other, he is to be overcome; because the revenging of Injuries perpetuates the Disorders of Society, and brings home as many Damages as it offers to others; and if the doing Good for Evil will not subdue all Tempers, the Law that knows no Revenge, may seasonably take place, to put a Stop to the Effects of his Enmity. As all moral Duties are founded in that Nature and Reason of Things, which is the Will of God antecedent to Revelation, so the Nature and Reason of Things is left by God in all his general Precepts of Morality, to be the Interpreter of them, for the best Benefit of particular Persons, in Conjunction with the publick Good.

3. **BEING** a Candidate for **HEAVEN**; as heavenly Things are to be preferr'd before earthly, in all Prudence, whenever they are incompatible, Prudence will explain and proportion its Measures in observing those Precepts; *Take no Thought for to-morrow*; and those concerning *Self-denial*, *Mortification* of irregular Appetites, parting with an *offending Right Hand*, *praying without ceasing*, &c.

MORTIFYING the *Flesh with its Affections and Lusts*, will at least mean all Excesses and Irregularities that are mischievous to others, or ourselves, that war against the Soul and its Government, and the publick Good of Society; Self-denial is always in our Power, a constant

Virtue incumbent in all Temptations to the contrary; and is best maintain'd by that regular Piety and Devotion, which, *ceasing not* at its returning Times and Seasons, keeps the Soul above this World, and checks the Reins of its Appetites for all Things in it. 'The most perfect Scope of *Temperance in all Things*, being not to afflict the Body merely for Affliction Sake, but to keep it at under, and raise and facilitate the Service and Ministration of spiritual Things:'. Or as St. Paul expresses it, *striving for the Mastery*, in Prospect of an *incorruptible Crown*. The Body being the chief Occasion of various Sins, in the various Temperature of its Passions, there can be no due Care of the Soul, without a due Guard upon the other. So that a *masterly Sobriety* is the Rule and Measure of those Things, and that is the Advice of Reason and Prudence, as well as of holy Scripture. *Presenting the Body a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God*, is called in this last, a *reasonable Service*; and Tully prescribes in his Laws, L. II. *Ut non casto modo Corpore, sed Animo etiam adoatur ad Deos*.

As to the Religion of the MEANS, that being the vital Part of Christianity, as it is itself a Revelation of the best Means to the best End; and as the Design of that is to bring us Salvation and eternal Life, upon the Terms, and in the Way and Manner it prescribes; if there is the least Degree of true Reason and Prudence left in Men and Sinners, it will shew itself: 1. In receiving and interpreting every thing of *pure Revelation* relating to *Jesus Christ*, the appointed Mediator

Ὁ πλεονάτης ἡ ἐσκεπταία σκοπός, ἐχ' ὡς ἡ τῆ σῶματος, βλέπειν κακοπαθεῖν, ἀλλὰ ὡς ἡ τῶν ψυχῶν διακονημάτων εὐκολία. Greg. Nyss. of the Worship of God, c. 22.

Mediator between God and Man ; the Head of all the Means for reconciling us, and obtaining from him, Remission of Sins, Peace of Conscience, Joy and Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, and all the Glories and Felicities of eternal Life, as they are in Truth the *pure* Mercy, *free* Grace, and *unmerited* Favour of Heaven.

SEEING Reason, without Revelation, could never have made the Discovery, much less make the least Claim of Right, or merit to such an unspeakable Gift ; and therefore neither presume to add to, nor diminish from it ; but embrace it with all Thankfulness, just as it is offer'd upon the Terms and Conditions propounded to us ; and, accordingly on our Part, so to respect and obey those Commands for believing in him dying for our Sins, to avert all Evils from us ; and interceding at the Right Hand of God to procure all Good ; as to delay no longer to repent us of our Sins ; to draw near to God with the filial Acceptance we are adopted to ; offering up our Prayers and Praises in his Name ; and living in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life. As the common Discretion of Gratitude, in order to strike the deeper Impression on the Mind, teaches to magnify, rather than diminish the Value of a free generous Gift ; so, in case of doubt, we should incline to that Side of Interpretation which ascribes all the Greatnesses and Perfections of the Divine Nature to the Son of God, who descended from Heaven to save this World, that are consistent with his being the *Son* of God, and not the *Father* himself.

2. As these are Means, are no more than Means, Prudence will instruct us that all their

Efficacy and Value as to ourselves, consists in their Application to, and Production of their designed End; and till that End is obtain'd, they have more of a condemning, than a saving Profession towards us. Faith without Works is dead, and Knowledge in all Mysteries, without Charity, nothing worth; Faith without Works, in the eloquent Allusion of the Apostle, is the same insolent insolvent Absurdity, as feeding the Bellies, and cloathing the Backs of the Poor, with Words only,

3. As these Means are indispensably necessary (where they are promulg'd) for that End; Prudence will accordingly apply them with all Diligence and Gratitude; not daring to make the least Alteration, or hoping for any Acceptance with God in contemning his Will and Wisdom in appointing them so expressly for that End, and to our own Good. And the same Prudence will convince us, that as private Reason is the Judge and Measure of the Circumstances of private Service of God in those Means; so *publick* Discretion ought to be the Judge and Measure of the Circumstances of the *publick* Worship and Service of Him. And as *indifferent* Things in that Worship, are the sole Object of *Magistracy* and *Authority*, when ever it thinks fit to interpose and recommend, wheresoever nothing does creep in as a Sin and Transgression of the general Law of *Decency*, *Order*, and *Edification*, never to use, or stretch *Liberty*, in case of doubtful Interpretation, to the Prejudice and Diminution of *Government* and *Obedience*, those great Blessings and Preservatives of Society.

THESE few prudential Observations will serve to rescue the Scriptures from those puzzling Obscurities our Author purposely throws upon them, in so many Pages of his Book, in order to render them an useless Rule of Religion. He us'd to shew some seeming respect to Christianity with regard to its Morality, and pretend to value it as a Republication of the Law of Nature, and acknowledge our Saviour as a Prophet and Teacher; yet, according to his accustom'd Inconsistency, he endeavours to pull down what he himself built, and destroy not only one, but every Part of that admirable Restorative of the Corruption of human Nature; which is a further Confirmation, that the true and only Reason of his, and others of his way of thinking, declaring War against it, is nothing else but the *Goodness* of its Morals, and that Aid and Improvement of our disorderly Nature, which the old Philosophers languish'd after, but these Men abhor; which is however giving in an Enemies Testimony to the Truth of it; that *they who do Evil hate the Light, neither come to it, lest their Deeds should be reprov'd, John iii. 20.*

THESE few Observations, I say, with 1. The additional Care of duly observing the Context, in the Scope and Design of the Words; the Coherence and Connexion of the Parts of the Discourse.

2. ALWAYS interpreting *figurative*, by plainer Expressions, relating to the same Subject, where they are to be found; and where they are not so expounded by other Texts, extending the Figure

no farther than the precise Point of Verisimilitude it was adapted to.

3. ALWAYS understanding (for there can be no Inconsistency in Truth, nor any Lye come of it) *literal* Expressions so, as to contradict no one Attribute of God, whether natural or moral, that is plainly known to belong to him; nor any eternal Distinction between Good and Evil in Morality.

4. RESOLVING upon doing the Will of God, putting on the becoming *Love of the Truth*; and laying aside all Passion, Prejudice, and disagreeing Interest, arising from *Filthiness, Superfluity of Naughtiness*, and worldly Lusts.

5. PRAYER for the Assistance of the *Holy Spirit*, who delights to encourage, Enquiries into the Sense of Things, of his own inditing. In the Help of this Prudence, all well disposed Christians will *receive with Meekness the ingrafted Word*, not as it is the Word of Men, *but as it is in Truth the Word of God*; a plain clear Rule of Faith and Manners in all the Necessaries of Salvation, which was its primary Design to make us wise in. And secondly in all other instructive, corrective, and accomplishing Parts, wherewith it would perfect and adorn our Knowledge and Practice; and exalt and consummate us in the highest Glory and Felicity appointed unto Mortals. Or, in the Words of that great Searcher after Truth, Mr. Lock, 'Therein are contain'd the Words of eternal Life. It has God for its Author; Salvation for its End; and Truth, without any Mixture of Error, for its Matter.'

C H A P.

* His Letter to the Reverend Mr. King, p. 345. *Collection of Pieces.*



C H A P. X.

Of the PRIESTLY *Office of our*
MEDIATOR *upon Earth.*

IN treating upon this most important Subject how God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, according to the amiable Truth as it is in *Jesus*, I will 1. shew what is not the Method Mankind is to depend upon. 2. What is the Method laid down in Scripture for obtaining Salvation, or which is the same Thing, Remission of Sins and eternal Life.

UNDER the first Head I will shew that where the Gospel is promulg'd, neither the Republication of the Law of Nature, nor the Example of Christ suffering Death, as a *bare* Testimony to God's reconcilable Disposition to penitent Sinners, nor Repentance grounded upon the presumptive Goodness of God were intended to be rely'd upon: Nor are any of them, or all together, sufficient to support the Hopes of any nominal Christian, and therefore ought to be rectified as dangerous Mistakes.

1. NOT the Republication of the Law of Nature, which our Author makes the Sum total of Christianity; because, that shews us from whence we are fallen, and points out the End of our

Creation, in all the Instances of Duty we have defected from; and, instead of justifying, serves to accuse us, and bring our Sins to Remembrance. It is but little Comfort to Rebels to have a new Edition of the Laws against Rebellion put out, they knew too much against themselves before. *Do this and live*, upon the old footing, is killing them twice over; or to what Purpose should they repent upon the same Bottom? *Righteousness* was the original Constitution of the Kingdom of God, but the Mediator making Peace for Sinners, added to the future Constitution of it *Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*, upon Repentance and Amendment, which was to supply lost Innocence.

AND as a gracious Pardon is at the same time proclaim'd for Deviations, how great, or many soever, excepting none, but such as subvert the Belief of that gracious Method of the God of all Mercy, then it suits their Circumstances indeed, and belongs to them to listen and enquire what are the Terms and Conditions of Forgiveness and Reconciliation: And if they are found to be not only practicable, but very easy, and adjusted to the Weakness of our present Nature, and the Commandments new qualified to the Capacity of our Obedience; and are no other than the Rules and Measures of new and greater Happiness upon future Obedience; what Rebel in his Wits would not joyfully receive the Terms, as Life from the dead? Or not embrace the Conditions as a new Lease and Covenant of Existence and Enjoyment of himself? Or think Obedience a Burthen, when the Ways thereof are Pleasantness and Peace, with Happiness consummate, and within his Reach? Who would neglect

neglect to wash and be clean, and blot out his Sins, and be received into the appointed Capacity of Favour, only because he was *commanded* so to do by a Sovereign, as much superior to him in Reason and Understanding, as he is in Power and Dignity? Or refuse to remember the Mediator of that better Covenant? Who so obligingly procured and proclaim'd this Pardon to Rebels, in the Way, and to the Purpose He would be remembered. Though he requir'd neither one nor the other, (as has been before observed, *Chap. VI.*) but to nourish us up in Devotion, and more perfect Amendment to the moral Law of Nature.

AND therefore there is Reason to conclude, that neither Amendment, nor Repentance, nor Devotion, can be perform'd by them with any Assurance of Acceptance; as long as they despise the intervening Pardon, and reconciling Grace of the Mediator, with respect to that Law which is holy, just, and good; and their Behaviour towards it, which is the Reverse, in very many Respects, as they know in their Conscience: And consequently, through their own Obstinacy, lie under the Condemnation of that Law, without any to help. For that they are not able by any other Method to help themselves, will appear afterwards.

2. NOT the *Example* of Christ, &c. because that likewise helps to condemn us, inasmuch as our Imitation can't come up to the Perfection of it. He is the only perfect Pattern we can follow; but if our Hope of Salvation is built upon equaling Him, who then can be saved?

THE chief Things recommended to our Imitation, are his *Humility* and *Patience*. But as the saving Virtue of the Redeemer extended to all Generations *before* his Birth, as well as to those since, how could they receive the Benefit of bettering their Morals by his non-apparent Example of those Virtues; if something farther was not anticipated from the Propitiation of his Death, then latent under the Death of their Sacrifices?

THE perfect Obedience of his Life, indeed, so far satisfied, *i. e.* fulfill'd the preceptive Part of the Law, as to justify both the Law and the Law-giver, that they were holy, just, and good, in exacting of Man perfect Obedience to it; since the *second Adam*, in our Nature, actually perform'd that Righteousness, which the first *Adam* was wilfully defective in. Not that he came to fulfil the preceptive Part of the Law for us, so as to excuse our best Endeavours to keep and do it; but, wherein we are insolvent by reason of the Frailty of our Nature, in paying that Debt due from us by Creation and Preservation, he paid for us; and by his Obedience unto Death, moreover, whereby many became Righteous, he conditionally satisfied and fulfill'd the vindictive Part of the Law for us, and so discharged that Debt of Punishment due (in the literal Sense of Demerit, in the metaphorical, of *Wages* payable by the Devil, who had the Power of Death) to that Part of the Law; which for us to have paid ourselves, without Hope of a Resurrection, would have been the eternal Ruin of that Part of us, our Body. But God governing by the Nature of Things, and Man having subjected himself to Death, it became necessary for him

him to submit to it, in order to regain, through the *second Adam*, that Immortality to his Body, which the Tree of Life was ordained to impart.

NOR was his Obedience unto Death, as a bare Testimony of the Truth of the Doctrine of Remission of Sins upon Repentance, or as a martyr'd Witness to the Truth that God was in his Disposition placable and reconcileable to penitent Sinners, the Thing intended to be rely'd upon: Because the Persons, who have no other Opinion of the Death of Christ, but this, would have been equally persuaded of that Truth from the Notions they entertain of the Goodness of God, whether Christ had died in such a Manner or not; or whether he had ever been once mention'd in Scripture as a Mediator between God and Man, or not.

WHAT had a Mediator to do, or undertake in such a Case? There was no Peace to make but what Man was sufficient to, of himself. Or what need of a new or better Covenant? Or what Occasion for any new Terms or Conditions? If the *Jews* or *Greeks*, understood *Christ crucify'd* in no other Sense, than dying in Testimony of the Truth of his Doctrine, how could it be a Stumbling Block to one, or Foolishness to the other; since one had their *Socrates*, and the other built the Tombs of the Prophets they had kill'd upon that Account? The *Blood of righteous Abel*, the first Witness and Martyr of Truth, *speaketh* his own particular Reward in another State, but the *Blood of sprinkling*, for the cleansing of Conscience, *speaketh better Things*, even the Assurance of eternal Life and Salvation to *all* that believe, and obey,

IF the refreshing the Mind of Sinners with such a Truth in Theory, that God was of a placable Nature, was all that was wanting, God might have commission'd any mere Man, to have preached up such a Doctrine, and dy'd for it at last; if any Set of Men could be found so barbarous to their own Hopes, as to take away his Life for that Assertion. But this is never once mentioned to be the End, and Design of Christ's Death, because a further Truth, vastly superior to the other, (as much superior, as *Matter of Fact* is to Arguments *a Priori*, or a *Principle* or *Cause* is to the Conclusion or Effect drawn from it, or the *Manner* of a Thing actually done, is to the Possibility of its being done) was witnessed, and intended to be rely'd upon for Remission of Sins, and the Salvation of the World. And that was, that God was *actually, publickly* (know all Men by these Presents) *atton'd*, and *propitiated* by, and through the Means, and Method, and *Matter of Fact* of Christ dying for our Sins; that *our Peace with God is made for us, by the Blood of his Cross*¹.

A TRUTH in Theory before it is verify'd into a Reality, is not capable of being transferred, and assign'd over to those, who are to receive the Benefit of it; but when it becomes a *Speciality*, a real *Act* and *Deed*, it is transferrable as a *Right*, and *Property*, upon the Conditions that go along with it: And therefore *we rejoice, we glory, we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the Attonement*². *We have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins*, Col. i. 14. He is affirmed to make *Reconciliation*

¹ Col. i. 20. ² Rom. v. 2, 3, 11.

liation for the Sins of the People, Heb. ii. 17. and that he is merciful and faithful in that Office ; which was offering Gifts and Sacrifice for Sin ; that certainly implies reconciling God to Sinners, which was the very Province of the Jewish High Priest by the yearly Sacrifice on the great Day of Atonement : *The Blood of the everlasting Covenant* is affirmed to be the Means whereby God becomes the God of Peace, Heb. xiii. 20. And our Mediator, who by his precious Blood-shedding, was our Peacemaker with God, is said to be our Peace. And therefore in every Place, where Mention is made of our being reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, or the World, or all Things reconciled, or in a Posture of Reconciliation with himself in, or through Christ, there is always Mention of our Peace being also made with God.

IN the first Covenant in Paradise, though between a Superior and Inferior, there was no Need of a Mediator, because as long as the Law or Covenant was observed, there was perfect Harmony and Friendship between God and Man ; but as soon as that was broke, the Peace was broke, and God would no more covenant or treat with Man, but through a Mediator. But the very Nature of that Covenant supposes and expresses God to be reconciled and pacify'd towards Man, as well as Man towards God ; *I will establish my Covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord : That thou may'st remember and be confounded, and never open thy Mouth any more because of thy Shame, when I am pacify'd towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God. Ezek. xvi. 62, 63.* Indeed the very Notion of a Reconciliation

¹ Eph. ii. 14. John xvi. 33. Act. x. 36. Rom. v. 1. Col. i. 19. If. ix. 6.

tion between two Parties, by Means of a *Third*, sufficiently implies, that both Parties are at Variance, one with the other; there is otherwise hardly any Sense to be made of Christ our Mediator reconciling Man to God, unless he also reconciled God to Man. There lies the Strength of the *Apostle's* Inference, and the whole Emphasis of his Intreaty; God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, *not imputing their Trespases unto them*; that was a Demonstration *he was reconciled*, and the first Person in the Difference that was so; then addressing to the Inferior, Man, *we pray you, in Christ's Stead, be ye reconciled to God*: And makes this the very Ground and Foundation of that Prayer in Christ's Stead; *for he hath made him to be Sin for us, [Sin-Offering] who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.*

IF Man only had been at Variance with Heaven, which is but half the Truth of the Case, a common Angel was Envoy sufficient to have been sent thence; or an Arch-Angel might have put on the Character of an Ambassador. But when a *Mediator* interposes, who is more in Person, in Power, and in Interest, than either of the other, and who has himself *Ambassadors* under himself, *viz.* his *Apostles*; it is Evidence sufficient to all the World, that there was a Breach between, and a mutual Reconciliation wanting between God and Man.

IN one respect, he may be said to die a *Witness*, *i. e.* of the essential *Holiness* and *Righteousness* of his Father in hating Sin, and requiring Man's Obedience to his most righteous Laws, and upon Failure,

Failure, adjudging the denounc'd Punishment. For which Reason, in his Addresses to him, he never stiles him merciful, but *Holy, Righteous Father, in his finishing the Work he gave him to do*¹; which Work, when finish'd, gave full *Satisfaction* to that supreme Perfection of the Father, which is the Foundation of his moral Government over Man. And both Parties being put into a State of Reconciliation, gives a compleat Notion of Expiation and Propitiation made by the Mediator for the Offender towards the Offended; Restitution and Satisfaction to the Divine Laws being stipulated and covenanted on Man's Part, as far as he is able, and wherein he fails through Imperfection, made good. Thus the Goodness and Mercy of God flows from, and is regulated by right Ideas of the Perfection of his Holiness.

3. NOR is that grand *Asylum* of the Deists, *Repentance*, with its supposed Amendment, grounded upon the *Presumptive* Goodness of God, to be depended upon for Remission of Sins, and eternal Life: I call it the presumptive Goodness of God, as they assume upon it, in Opposition to his *promised, revealed, covenanted* Goodness, in the Mediator Christ. Had God thought Repentance sufficient, though it was the natural and only Means of Recovery in Conjunction with Prayer that Man could suggest, after he was fallen into a State of Sin and Guilt, he might have accepted it in the first Covenant of Works: But had he given any Intimation upon that first Tryal of Obedience, of his Acceptance of Repentance; it would directly have contradicted the very Law he had given, and supplanted his own Intention, and,

¹ John xvii.

and, instead of establishing Innocence, had encouraged Transgression.

AND if the wilful and ungrateful Transgression of that Law brought more Contempt upon God's Authority over his new-made Creature, newly submitted, as he was, to a Command (as a Creature ought to be to his Creator) than the Tenor of his Obedience all the Days of his Life could have brought Honour and Glory to him : Inasmuch as this last is no more than a just Debt of Reason, and Creation, in preferring the Service and Favour of God before those low contemptible Rivals, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil ; and therefore could have no higher Honour in it than the paying a just Debt or Tribute that a Man is obliged to ; but with deliberate Reason actually to prefer either of them before the infinitely superior good and great Creator, (as is the Case of every wilful Transgression of his Law) is the very sinfulness of Sin, the greatest Dishonour and Disparagement of God, and the greatest Enormity and Iniquity of Reason, that the Thoughts of Man can be guilty of.

AND consequently, if Man would of himself think of any suitable Reparation to his Honour, or any tolerable Vindication of his Law and Authority for the Contempt put upon it, he must devise some honorary, meritorious Act of Obedience, as much *above* what he was formerly obliged to, as the Contempt he was guilty of, was *below* his Duty ; but if the utmost *whole* of his Obedience is no more than what is justly due, and God has a rightful Claim to it *all* ; how can a *broken* Obedience be judg'd sufficient for that Purpose ? It is therefore impossible, in the Judgment

ment of Reason, that a Return to Duty by Way of Repentance and Amendment, can effect it.

No, though we had kept all the Commandments, we had still been but unprofitable Servants; what then can an unconstant patch'd-up Behaviour avail in the Sight of God? Supposing at the best, the Remnant of Life that is left, to be as clean, regular as it ought to be, how can Repentance alone claim an Acquittance, or Pardon of that Part that is past, and has been ill spent? The rest of the Piece may be full of Stains and Blots; Can the clean Part wash out that? Does not almost every one know more Evil by himself, than he knows Good? What Interest can such an impure extravagant Creature pretend to have in God, in his own Person? He that can pretend to be perfectly innocent, may pretend also to justify himself, and stand before him in Judgment; but who has the Presumption to think of that? God then must be the *Father* of the *Penitent* by adopting and accepting us in his Son. The Conscience consequent upon past Sins, is still present, upon Reflection, to accuse for those Deviations of the Law, nor can it exonerate itself of those Accusations, without laying hold of somebody more righteous, to entreat for it, and of some Assurance of Remission of Sin in a Promise of Pardon, publish'd and certain.

SANCTIONS of Rewards and Punishments are the Support of all Law and Government in Heaven and Earth: But no Law nor Authority in either can stand, and be safe, if the bare Repentance of criminal Subjects without any thing further, was to pass current in Lieu of Obedience, and be commuted for the Punishment incurr'd,

as oft as they pleased ; there would be no Difference betwixt Law and no Law ; Governor and govern'd are upon a Level ; and the Subject would be a Law to himself ; nay, had God proclaim'd his Acceptance of Sinners Repentance, with their Promises of Amendment accompanying, without the Interposition of a Mediator, (or a more valuable Consideration for securing the Dignity of his Laws, and re-asserting, or rather heightning his Authority in the Hearts of his Subjects by what he did, and suffer'd) the natural Disobedience of Man would take Encouragement to go on, or rather increase.

FOR, in that Case, the Deceitfulness of Sin would soon teach him to flatter himself ; and draw such Inferences from the magnify'd Goodness of God, as are easy and suitable to his beloved Lusts. If God is so good to me as to proclaim his Acceptance of my Repentance, upon my Promise of Amendment ; my non-Amendment is a greater Object of his Goodness, and therefore surely he will accept my Repentance *without* Amendment ; and as a Piece or some small Part of Repentance is a greater Object still of his Goodness than the whole Sorrow and Contrition of that Duty ; is it not more glorious to the Amplitude of that Attribute to accept of a *Part*, instead of the Whole ? Thus the Law of God upon such a defective Proclamation, (which is all that the *Deists* desire to hear of) would be totally disregarded ; and by Degrees lose its Respect even from Repentance itself, any farther than in Name.

AND what Occasion for Repentance any farther ? If what our Author says is true, That
no

‘ no Man breaks the Divine Laws out of Contempt of his Maker, or imagines he can do God an Injury’. — ‘ That in punishing, he acts not as an injur’d Party, who wants Satisfaction, or Reparation of Honour. — ‘ None ought to be punish’d, (since what is pass’d can’t be help’d) but to prevent a future Breach of the Law. — ‘ It is Tyranny to multiply Punishments on Pretence of vindicating the Honour of the Legislator. — ‘ Anger is to be excluded from the Deity, as the weak womanish Part of our Nature’. — ‘ he would otherwise not enjoy a Moment’s Quiet’.

He argues upon a Supposition that all the Laws of God were designed for our Good; and therein he is right: But then he mistakes what that real Good of Man is, which those Laws proposed to advance; and that is the Ground of his fallacious Arguments. Was it the Good of sensual Delights, and the uninterrupted Enjoyment of this World, which he seems only to have his Eye upon, his Conclusions would be every one right. But if the Commands of God are so many Rules and Directories of our highest Good, to the Perfection of our Nature, and our Obedience to them so many essential Qualifications for our future Happiness in Heaven; then our Disobedience, though it disturbs not the Tranquillity and Happiness of God, certainly disoblige and undervalues his Love, and dishonours his Wisdom in giving us such Laws for our Good; and he has Reason, if not for his own Sake, at least for ours, and the rest of his rational Creatures, to resent such Contempt, and be angry at such Disappointment, and punish such Obstinacy.

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when

when it is irreformable; as every wise and affectionate Parent would do, when his Children take unruly Courses.

AND the more Concern is shewn in his heavenly Dispensations for repairing the Contempt, and vindicating the Honour of those holy Laws; and by all other Ways, procuring our Compliance to them, the more apparently he consults our Good, and the more we correspond to that his Intention, the more Honour we do him, as our Lawgiver, the more we live to, and act for his Glory, as our God and Governor.

AND consequently the Practice of Sin which is justly stiled *Enmity* to God, and proportionably any Scheme for encouraging it, being a Contradiction to, and an actual Endeavour to frustrate this Governor, of the great End and Direction of his Government, the general Happiness of Man in both Worlds, which is the *greatest Good* imaginable; the other being a declar'd Opposition to this Good, must be the *greatest Evil* imaginable. And the Guilt of it persisted in, after so much Goodness and Mercy in sending his Son into the World, to remedy this Evil, and subdue this Opposition by the Kindness of his Doctrine, his Life, his Death, his Intercession, must deserve the *greatest Punishment* imaginable.

He brings two Quotations * from Christian Writers concerning the natural Efficacy of Repentance for procuring Pardon and Reconciliation with God, argued from the Attribute of Divine Goodness. But it had been more to his Purpose, to have cited some Heathen, an utter Stranger to all

* Pag. 354.

all Revelation, arguing in like Manner from the Goodness and Wisdom of God. For it is plain, all the Arguments of Deists, and others, who are acquainted with the Christian Revelation, have received that Improvement from their improved Notion of the Goodness of God; not as it is discoverable *a priori* from the Light of Nature, but as it is discover'd *ex post facto* from Revelation.

BECAUSE, in fact, the Heathen Philosophers are not found to argue at that rate; being embarrass'd with the inextricable Difficulty, how to reconcile their natural Notion of the Divine Justice, as Governor and Punisher of evil Deeds, with the Divine Goodness, inclining to Pardon, there is an universal Silence as to Remission of Sins, and the Duty of Repentance issuing out of that Persuasion, must be in Proportion to it. There is but one remarkable Instance of their Repentance in History, that of the *Ninevites* threaten'd with immediate Destruction; yet their Belief of Remission of Sins amounted to no more than, *perhaps, who can tell*, but God will turn from his fierce Wrath: Even Mr. Bayle himself, in his Dictionary, Article *Zia* or *Zea*, confesses that he does not remember in all his vast Reading, *one* Instance of any of the Heathens *asking Pardon for their Sins*: See towards the Conclusion of his *Notes* on that Article: Therefore the *Repentance*, which the modern Deists set up their Staff in for Reconciliation with God, having quite perish'd out of the Heathen World, must be borrow'd from that *Revelation* they so much despise.

THE Heathens knowing no one appointed Mediator, nor any certain acceptable Sacrifice

for Sin, in order to appease the Doubts and Tumults in human Breasts, had Recourse to infinite feign'd Mediators, (in *Hesiod's* Time, the Number was got up to *thirty thousand* Gods) and to endless Sacrifices; expiatory for turning away Wrath; or petitionary for obtaining Blessing; changing from this to that, multiplying all Sorts in every Kind, uncertain of the Validity of any; and exhorted others to depend upon the same Devotion to Heaven, without any Mention of Repentance towards God. Both of which had been most absurd both in Theory and Practice, had it ever enter'd into their Thoughts, that Repentance and Amendment were sufficient, of *themselves*, to atone the Deity. Some few Philosophers, it must be own'd, had better Notions of worshipping God, in Hopes of Acceptance, from a pure Mind; and the Resolution of imitating the Moral, &c. the truly Godlike Exhibitions of him, whom they adored.

BUT that Remission of Sins and some Benefit of the new Covenant, founded in the Mediator promised to the first Progenitor of Mankind, may be extended throughout all Ages, to as many in every Heathen Nation as diligently seek to please God, in the Disadvantages they lie under, is a Notion of Reconciliation and Pardon most becoming the Goodness of God; because, though they themselves are ignorant of that *Promise*, the Mediator of the Covenant is present to negotiate the Effect of it to their Benefit; in Compassion to the Sincerity of their best Endeavours; and of their Wishes after more Knowledge, under their deplored Want of the same.

AND

And therefore it would have become our Author in his Observations on these Words of Dr. Clark, *That as no Man ever deny'd, but that the Benefit of Christ's Death extended backward, to those who lived before his Appearance in the World; so no one can prove, but the same Benefit may extend itself forward to those, who never heard of his Appearance; though they lived after it.* 'If both these, though knowing nothing of Christ, or his Death, reap the Benefit of his Death; what more can the most perfect Believer expect? So that even upon this Supposition, the Doctor must have own'd, that all Men living up to that Light God has given them, are upon a Level, in relation to their future Happiness,' *pag. 378.* to have drawn the true Inference, which is the proper Application to the *Deists*: Seeing they are neither perfect Believers; nor can they pretend never to have heard of the Appearance of Christ; what Benefit, what future Happiness are they like to have of his Death? — The Doom of their wilful Unbelief is too melancholy an Answer to such a Query.

For the Point of all the Arguments of all *resolute Deists* turns upon themselves, and wounds their own Souls; and destroys their boasted Hopes of Reconciliation, from their misapply'd Notions of the Goodness of God in Favour of the Repentance and Amendment they depend upon in a Christian Country. Here lies the unhappy, unperceiv'd Fallacy, and the very Misery of their Mistakes: They have read the Holy Scriptures of the old and new Testament; there they found with Pleasure, the Manifestations made of God, as full of Pity, Mercy, Compassion, Forbearance,

Pardon and Forgiveness of Sinners, flow to Anger, and not willing that any should Perish, &c. and as our Author has it, whose *Nature and Property is ever to forgive*: These strong Lights and charming Lines of the Love and Goodness of God to Sinners, they ungratefully borrow from Revelation, and with a plagiary Pencil work into their natural Picture of the Goodness of God, which they pretend to draw from the Light of Nature *only*; and so set up natural Religion grounded thereupon, in Opposition to, and utter Destruction of revealed Religion: And all the Time, have so little Sense of natural Justice, as to make no Restitution to the latter, for all the Beauties and Excellencies they have stolen from it, but go on to accuse what they are principally beholden to, and set at Naught their Maker, that they could not have done without. But Ingratitude against God, in order to deny him in his Dispensations, and affront him in his wise Methods of shewing Mercy unto Men, will never prosper.

LET them know, that all those Manifestations which they unworthily encroach upon, are no less, nor no other than the Displays of God and his Goodness in *actual Covenant* with Mankind, through a *Mediator*; that all that Mercy and Pity, Pardon and Forgiveness to Sinners is *promised*, is *stipulated*, is *covenanted* upon certain Conditions, in and through him; and that Repentance and Amendment is but one of the Conditions.

OUR Author falsely asserts, that *what is past can't be help'd*; though it is true, in a natural physical Sense, what is done can't be undone; yet,

yet, in a moral Sense, as to the *Effect* and *Consequence* of the Action, if the Guilt and Punishment of it is released, through the Mediator, the Action itself is undone.

BUT if they will arrogate to themselves Remission of Sins upon Repentance and Amendment, in Contempt of the Mediator who procured it, it is but righteous in the Saviour of Men to laugh also at their contemptuous Devices, and leave them to the ruinous Effects of being their own Saviours. They may as well set up to forgive their own Sins, and lay God quite aside, as not permit Him, who is certainly a little wiser than themselves, who is the offended Party moreover, and should know best, and have the most Right to declare upon what Terms he will be reconciled, to chuse the Method and the Manner Offenders are to comply with, as ever they expect his Favour.

TO be *without Christ* is the same Thing as to be *Strangers from the Covenants of Promise*; and to be *Strangers* to that, the same as to be *without Hope*; and to be *without that*, the same Thing as to be *without God in the World*, *Eph. xi. 12.* the Original is *ἄλλοι*, let them english it.

BUT these Men are old Acquaintance with the Covenants of Promise, yet make themselves Strangers to it, and contemptuously undervalueth the Promise, and the Adoption. Does not every *Civilian* know, and how could our Author be ignorant, that a Title is conveyed by *Adoption*, and Rights and Privileges acquired by that Favour, to which there could be no Pretence form'd without it, by those more especially, who disdain the Adoption

tion and the easy Conditions thereof? And is not an *adoptive* Father, upon Account of those Advantages of *well-being*, to be preferr'd to a natural Father? Which shews that we are more beholden to God in Christ *redeeming* us, than to God in Christ *creating* us: And in perpetual Memory of the same, all taking their Name from the Family they are adopted into, are called *Christians*, and observe the *Lord's Day*, instead of the Sabbath. By virtue of this Adoption and Covenant, God is said to be *faithful* and *just* to *forgive us our Sins*. But what Claim, what Right can they have to the Forgiveness of Sins, when it is impossible to have any manner of Assurance of it, without Covenant, or Adoption, or Promise, or Revelation? The natural Notions of the Justice of God are as strong a Demonstration that He will not forgive Sin without Punishment, as the natural Notions of his Goodness can be a Demonstration that He will. So that natural Fear, being equal to natural Hope, all Assurance must be suspended for ever, which is the same thing as to suspend Repentance and Obedience for ever. But that neither of them should be desperate, God has reveal'd the utmost Assurance of the other that is possible to be given, and has bound himself in *Covenant*, by *Promise*, by *Oath*, to give and grant it as a Right to those Penitents, who approach him in and through the Mediator.

If then they desire any certain Hope, or pretend to any Right, they must embrace the Covenant, and repair to the Promise, and to the Record or Revelation thereof, the Gospel; which will still be no Benefit to them, but by their believing in *Christ*, as well as in God; and by so doing, will bring them in all Benefits and Blessings
 their

their sinful Nature can desire, or is capable of. Is not *promised* Mercy more friendly, and to be depended upon, than no Promise, and nothing but Presumption to go upon?

THEREFORE Christianity excels natural Religion, as to Pardon of Sin, as much as certain assured Knowledge exceeds Hope, which is the most the Heathen World could collect with all their Reasoning. How absurd is it for a *Stranger* or *Foreigner* amongst us, to pretend to a Claim of Inheritance, or Right of Purchasing; whilst he renounces the Wisdom of the Government, and his Consent to the Laws, so far, as not to desire to be naturaliz'd, become a *Denixon*, and *Member* of the Society? And therefore that Position, in the *Religion of Nature delineated*, 'Certainly that *Respect* or Relation which lies between God, consider'd as an *unchangeable* Being, and *one* that is humble and supplicates, and endeavours to qualify himself for Mercy, cannot be the same with that, which lies between the same *unchangeable* God, and *one* that is obstinate, and will not supplicate, or endeavour to qualify himself,' is truest in a Heathen Country; it can be no farther true in a Christian Society, than as the Endeavours to *qualify* oneself bears respect to the *Terms* and *Conditions* expressly necessary in the Christian Covenant, for quallifying oneself for Mercy.

GUESSES and Wishes, in lieu of Covenant and Engagements, are but a poor Support to a miserable Sinner. And if Repentance itself could be a sufficient Attonement for Sin, as it is a Passion, the Devils by repenting and forrowing might

might be capable of Pardon; but all the Virtue that is in it for obtaining Pardon, is derived from the Covenant of Mercy made and declared in *Christ Jesus*. The Devils are excluded out of the Covenant, by the Act of God, and these Men exclude themselves; and without Repentance and turning to the *Lord*, are in Danger of falling into *their* Condemnation. For the *rational* Moiety of a Man, by the Instigations of spiritual Pride and Opiniatry, (different from what they ridicule by the Name of *carnal* Reason) is as liable to deviate into a *Devil* hereafter; as the *animal* Moiety, for Want of Regulation, is apt to degenerate into a *Brute* here.

OUR Author¹ has an unlucky Observation, 'That Superstition is the peculiar Foible of Mankind,' which happens to be brought home to his own Door, with respect to false Notions of the Goodness of God; though he so incessantly declaims against Superstition, yet is he at the same time manifestly guilty of it himself: For if Superstition consists in having such wrong Notions of any of the Attributes of God, as are detrimental to ourselves, and others, in that Service of God, which his Truth, or true Notions of his Perfections, offer to our Reason, and requires at our Hands; he is a palpable Offender against the Goodness of God, by way of Works of Supererrogation; wherewith he would swallow up the Justice, Wisdom, and other Attributes of the Deity.

THE Deists riot in the Argument of Divine Goodness, to that Degree of Wantonness and Superstition, as to demolish all his other moral Per-

Perfections, as a Governor, and cut the Sinews of his Divine Government asunder. Their Notion of Goodness banishes all other Perfections from the Divine Nature, and is palpably and demonstratively inconsistent with Divine Dominion: Yet Sir *Isaac Newton*, and all Philosophers agree that *God* is a Relative Word, implies *Dominion*, and has Relation to Subjects and Servants. Whereas true Religion consists in maintaining a just Balance and Equilibrium amongst all the Attributes of God. Forasmuch as they don't govern our World in their Turns; but all in one joint, most amazing, and yet most adorable Majesty; infinitely more resplendent than all the Constellations of Heaven; there is no Limitation of any one of them by another, but what makes for the Glory of all the rest; as the Goodness of God by his Wisdom, and his Justice, by both the other, and all together constitute the *Divine Reason* of the most perfect Rector of the Universe. Mercy and Goodness never act without the Wisdom of Justice, nor Justice without the Wisdom of Mercy, in governing his Creature Man.

It is the Wisdom of God has been pleased to limit his governing Goodness, and nothing else can set Limits to Him but himself, within the Boundaries of a *covenanted* Dispensation, and confine its Exercise to the Channels of *Revelation* that flow from himself towards those who partake of them; that he might remember what he is to give and grant, and Men may know what they are to expect; this confirms their Faith, regulates their Hope, prevents Presumption, and secures Obedience. But for any who have those admirably wise Overtures purposely limited and adjusted to the Nature of Man, to do him the more Good;

to pretend to stretch and exalt that same Goodness beyond the Bounds of his own setting, is a *flattering* of God; or rather, as all Flattery is, a *mocking* him, as if He was incapable of Resentment or Dishonour, at the Violation of his Laws; or however would presently be pacified in his short Anger, with a Shew of Repentance or imperfect Amendment. This is a superstitious and most ruinous Presumption, a fighting against the rest of the Divine Attributes under the Banner of his Goodness; and under the Umbrage of that, attempting to pull him out of his Throne, from being any longer Ruler and Governor over us.

GOODNESS in a Governor, dispens'd without Discretion and Wisdom, is no more than a foolish, contemptible good Nature, and as little to be fear'd, fit for nothing but to make Subjects more insolent and audacious. I remember in our *English History* two *Earls* give that Reason for murdering one of the *Saxon Kings*; 'because 'say they, he was so gentle and good natured as 'to forgive every Body that offended him, without Distinction.'

THE not considering God as a Governor, nor measuring his Goodness by the Standard of the best Governor we can conceive, or wish in Reason, to have over us, as long as we are subject to his Laws, is the Occasion of so many palpable Mistakes about the Divine Goodness, which the *Deists* are notoriously guilty of.

PARTICULARLY the following in the *Author of Characteristicks*, 'Is the doing good for *Glory*'s

'*Oswy King of Northumberland, vid. Ecclard.*

‘ Glory’s Sake so Divine a Thing? Or is it not
 ‘ diviner, to do Good, even where it may be
 ‘ thought inglorious, even to the ungrateful,
 ‘ and to those who are wholly insensible of the
 ‘ Good they receive? How comes it then, that
 ‘ what is so *Divine* in us, should lose its Char-
 ‘ acter in the *Divine Being*? And that according as
 ‘ the *Deity* is represented to us, he should more
 ‘ resemble the weak, womanish, and impotent
 ‘ Part of our Nature, than the generous, manly,
 ‘ and divine’.

‘ Now, if there be really something previous
 ‘ to Revelation, some antecedent Demonstration
 ‘ of Reason to assure us that God is, and withal,
 ‘ *so good* as not to deceive us; the same Reason,
 ‘ if we will trust to it, will demonstrate to us,
 ‘ that God is *so good* as to exceed the very best of
 ‘ us in *Goodness*. And after this Manner we can
 ‘ have no Dread or Suspicion to render us uneasy;
 ‘ for it is *Malice* only, and not *Goodness*, which
 ‘ can make us afraid.’ — ‘ There can be no Ma-
 ‘ lice but where Interests are opposed, a universal
 ‘ Being can have no Interest opposite, and there-
 ‘ fore can have no Malice’. The *highest Good-
 ‘ ness* must of Necessity belong to him, without
 ‘ any of those Defects of Passion, those Mean-
 ‘ nesses and Imperfections which we acknowledge
 ‘ such in ourselves, which, as good Men, we en-
 ‘ deavour all we can to be superior to, and which
 ‘ we find we every Day conquer as we grow bet-
 ‘ ter’.

‘ We must be in the best of Humours, — to
 ‘ understand well what that *true Goodness* is, and
 ‘ what those Attributes imply which we ascribe
 ‘ with

‘ with so much Applause and Honour to *Deity*,
 ‘ we shall then be able to see better, whether
 ‘ those Forms of Justice, those Degrees of Punishment, that Temper of Resentment, and
 ‘ those Measures of Offence and Indignation,
 ‘ which we vulgarly suppose in God, are suitable
 ‘ to those original Ideas of Goodness, which the
 ‘ same divine Being has imprinted in us. — This
 ‘ is the Security against all Superstition; to remember that there is nothing in God but what
 ‘ is *Godlike*; he is either *not at all*, or truly and
 ‘ perfectly good.’

THE noble Author draws all his Foils and Comparisons of Goodness for Illustration of the Divine, from our *private* Sentiments and Transactions with one another; had he drawn them from the Goodness of any *Sovereign*, in his Capacity of governing according to Law, and the best Advantage of the Community, as God is represented in the Holy Scripture; (and such Representations of his *relative, governing* Goodness are generally laid aside, and declined by them, since they have declined Revelation) those Notions of *Malice* would have dropp’d; and some *Form of Justice, Degrees of Punishment, Temper of Resentment, and Measure of Offence and Indignation*, though vulgarly supposed in him, would be found not only compatible with, but *necessary* to the Exercise of the Divine Goodness; and to be attributed with Honour and Applause to the Deity, as Instances of *true Goodness* in the Judgment of all wise Men; and as Ornaments, rather than any Diminution to the *Goodness* of our *heavely Governor*.

INFINITE

INFINITE are the Errors and Wickednesses that spontaneously flow from false Notions of God's Goodness, in this Extreme. I shall mention but one or two more, they belong to this Subject, and are of the utmost Concern to be rightly apprized of the same.

THE Deists rejecting Revelation, or the only true Boundaries of our Opinion of this Attribute, unavoidably run into many fanciful Mistakes of this Sort, through that insufficient Guide of Reason they so totally and contentedly rely upon. They undoubtedly flatter, and promise themselves, that Repentance and Amendment, in their Way, will assuredly entitle them to eternal Life in Heaven. But in the Faculty of that Reason they depend upon, there is no *Proportion* to be found between the inconceivably great Happiness of *eternal Life*, and an entire, uninterrupted Course of Virtue in this short Life; much less the well known, and unavoidably many Imperfections of Obedience. No, eternal Happiness in Heaven is the *Gift* of God in *Christ*; no necessary Consequence of Virtue, nor *naturally* due unto it. The Reward being so stupendiously greater than the Work, there is no natural Justice in it; it would be Presumption in us so much as to hope for it, if there had not been a *Promise* of it, from the most superabounding Grace of God in Christ Jesus, who is the *Lord* of that Gift, and of all our Hopes.

AND has not He the Right, in common with every Benefactor, of prescribing the Terms and Conditions of his own Favour? And when He requires the believing on him *as such*, is it not

the most unreasonable Thing in the World to refuse it, when the eternal Inheritance to be given is of his own purchasing? The Apostle offering to describe the Value of this Favour, labours under the Loss of Expression, *and was Coloss. iii. v. 2.* immeasurably hyperbolical, supernatural; so ponderous a Weight of Glory as to outweigh this whole World of ours with all its Glories, Riches, and Jewels. And how should he expect to succeed in describing, what he acknowledges elsewhere, to be great and glorious beyond Conception; *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Things which God has prepared for those that love him.* And he represents the Love of Christ condescending to advance us to it, in the most exalted Strain of Expression; That we may be able to comprehend with all Saints, *what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge.*

BUT great as it is, and as much above our present Comprehension, as it is our Deserts, God in Christ has bound himself by Covenant, and Promise, to confer this unspeakable Gift upon our poor Services; and upon the due Performance of the Conditions on our Parts, we have a Right to claim, and the Mediator, who is the constituted Judge of our Behaviour, has a Right to oblige Him to the Performance, if there could possibly be any Scruple in the Case. *Whatever you shall ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son, John xiv. 13.*

AND if this is the glorious and comfortable Effect of what the Mediator has done, and suffered

fer'd for us; whither should the Lovers, or Pretenders to the Hopes of eternal Life resort, but to Him *who has the Words of it*; and the Gift of it moreover at his own Disposal? He has mercifully disposed of the Words of it to us, in hopes we will be so wise, as to qualify ourselves for the Gift. But what Right, what Claim, what Shadow of Pretence can these *Covenant-bazers*, and consequently *Out-Laws* before God, these *Naturalists* in Religion, form to themselves of this invaluable Enjoyment after Death?

SEEING then that Heaven and eternal Happiness there, is not the *Due* of Man, but the *Gift* of God; that Doctrine of the *Stoicks*, espoused by the *modern* Deists, which makes eternal Happiness attend upon Virtue by a *natural and eternal Necessity*, must be false; because it is founded upon two Fallhoods and Repugnancies to the Nature of Things. 1. It supposes *Merit* in Man, whereby he may assume to claim of God, by a *natural* Right, without any Thanks to him. 2. It supposes Man's *Independency* upon him (the Root of all Irreligion) that he is *sufficient* for his own Happiness without him, needing nothing from his *Grace* and *Favour*; not so much as that of his *Promise* and *Covenant*, which are never made in Justice or Debt to Man, but always in *unmerited Grace* and *Favour* towards him; and as often as Man complies with the Terms, kept afterwards with inviolable, claimable *Justice*; which the Deists, refusing his *Covenant*, have no more to do with, than with his *Grace*.

THOUGH they may assure themselves, *their Labour* would never prove vain *in the Lord*, if they will receive Him for their Mediator and

Lord — But as they will be beholden to nothing that he has done for them, and continue to reject the most Divine Counsel, and the most beneficent and sublime Reason of God's superlative Goodness exhibited in him, their Hopes can be little better than Castles in the Air; or rather a presumptuous Building a Tower on Earth to reach up to Heaven, that they may clamber thither in their own Way, whilst they pull down and overturn the common prescribed Method; as if they could climb to force the Angel that guards it, and steal the Tree of Life from the God of Heaven, to plant it in their thorny Field of Nature?

If they discard the Merits of Christ, they must set up *their own*; and so by throwing him out of their Faith, become guilty of the most horrible Arrogance, with the *Papists*, that is incident to a *Creature*; an Arrogance against Heaven, which none that ever were in Heaven durst ever think of, except the *fallen Angels*; and what was their Loss of that Place, but the indulging themselves in such Thoughts? Yet our Author, as a *Deist*, pretends to *merit* of God beyond *Papists* themselves. His Words are these, pag. 332, 333. 'Can he, who does a thing to avoid being punish'd, or in Hopes of being rewarded hereafter; and for the same Reason is ready to do the contrary; *merit*, at least, equally with him, who is in Love with his Duty, and is govern'd, not by servile Motives, but by the original Obligation of the moral Fitness of Things; in Conformity to the Nature, and in Imitation of the perfect Will of God? They who do not act thus, deserve not the Title of *true Deists*.'

ARE not they guilty, at the same time, of a Breach of one of the primary Laws of Nature, Self-Preservation, when they might, but won't be saved? What Enemies to themselves, and to Mankind, to go about to banish the Assurance of such a Hope out of the World? It is taking away a Life from the World more precious than its present Life, which is, or ought to be, the very Life of that Life.

THE Author of *Characteristicks* professes that our Conceptions of the Deity depend upon the *Humour* we are in, *i. e.* the Temper and Disposition of Man's Mind: Now what can procure or produce this best of Humour like a settled Covenant between God and Man? This assuredly puts every Man's Happiness into his own Power, having the Power of performing the Conditions. This cures all Excesses of his Passion for himself either rising to Presumption, or sinking into Despair; by curing all false Notions both of the Goodness, and Severity of God: The Promises of the Covenant are an Antidote against one, and the Threatnings against the other.

AND will they still slavishly stick to the Law of Works, that Law written in their Hearts, whilst their Heart fails them, and their Conscience daily accuses them for not keeping up to it? And still find in their Heart not to receive the second and better Covenant there? When it would put *their* Law of Nature farther into their inward Parts, and, in order to conquer that evil Heart of Unbelief, endear itself to their Judgment and Affections, under the Circumstances of being merciful to their Unrighteousness, and remem-

bring their Sins and Iniquities no more; and of the Yoke being render'd easy, and the Burthen light, through the Lord and Mediator of that Covenant; wherein there is promised Pardon for their Sins, and the Assistance of the Holy Ghost to help their Infirmities, and Life eternal for asking for, and the Sincerity of their best Endeavours accepted of in lieu of perfect Obedience: for the Uprightness and Perfection of Man's Obedience to the same, is declared in the renewal of that Covenant, or original Promise to *Abraham*, to consist in *Sincerity*, according to the Margin, *Gen. xvii. 1.* Though in that Covenant we convey no other Right to God than what he had a Claim to before, *viz.* the best Obedience of our Lives, yet for the better Security of that Obedience, it operates upon us with the Force of a *double* Obligation; that of God's Commandments, and that also which arises from the Honour of keeping the Faith of Covenant we voluntary obliged ourselves in. A Covenant wherein they may enter into the most happy, most honourable, most privileg'd State of mutual Contract with the Maker of Heaven and Earth, for the greatest Benefits their Nature is capable of, and upon Terms easy to be perform'd by their Frailties.

WHEREAS in their State of Nature, there is no *mutual* Obligation at all between God and Man, all the Weight of the Obligation lies upon Man; and no corresponding Obligation from God; who binds himself in no Promise or Stipulation, because Man refuses to be bound by any federal Right on his Part, to his own Happiness, and to accept Him for their God, in the Way only that he will at all be their God, or they

they can be his People: Can that be an equitable, or a tolerable Notion of the Goodness of God, which would make those equal in its Respects, whose moral Actions and Behaviour towards Him, are unequal, by slighting the Conditions of his Goodness? If it is morally certain from the Divine Goodness, that he would, at some certain Time and Place, *reveal* some Remedy to Man's Misery, and Restoration to his Happiness, to enquire not after that reveal'd Will and Goodness of God, but to spurn at the Offers of it, must be a most provoking, *immoral* Disobedience. Yet they consent not to the Revelation he has been pleas'd to make, which is as true, and as comfortable in Belief for their Life here, and for their Hopes hereafter, as is the Being of God.

FOR it gives them the true Knowledge of God, and of themselves; without which, one is as nothing, comparatively speaking, to the other. In Defiance of which they set up an *imaginary* Relation between as fanciful a Goodness of God and themselves, controuling and directing that to be, what it really is not, with respect to them, and to increase their own Rejection, making themselves to be what they really are not.

IT is not sufficient to consider the Goodness of God as the Author of our Beings and our Blessings, unless we consider our Relation to him likewise, as our Divine *Lawgiver* and *Governor*; what he requires from our Behaviour, to please him, and what he forbids under the Penalty of his Displeasure; and then to separate Justice from his Goodness, is to make him an Idol of our own Fancy, no God, no *Governor* over us;

and ourselves, though his Creatures daily preserv'd and oblig'd, yet not *accountable* to him for our Actions. From two Premises both of their own erecting, with respect to God's Goodness, and their own Sufficiency, and both fundamentally erroneous, what System for their Salvation can follow, but Self-deceit and Self-destruction; if God of his infinite Mercy does not open their Eyes, to let them see, and forsake their own Delusion?

Does he not know Himself, and them, much better than they can pretend either to know Him, or themselves? In order to give them, boasting themselves of the reverse, a due Sense of themselves, and take down that proud swelling Sufficiency, as of themselves, they ought to consider that they are *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and without Him can do nothing*. That God can do for them what they cannot do of themselves, enlighten, and enrich them, and make them very happy with Himself, provided they will submit to his Directions. He who is ignorant, but knows his own Ignorance, (as was the Case of the antient Philosophers) is far wiser, and more compassionate by the Deity, than he, who having received the Heavenly Instruction, with all the Treasures of Divine Wisdom and Goodness, for making him good; thinks himself wiser and better, than to put it to any other Use, but to rend those who lay such Pearl before him.

Is it fitting they should deal as boldly by his Goodness as they do by his Justice? drawing upon it great Sums of Favour and Bounty, on all their Occasions, and without Leave, claiming a

Title hereafter to an happy Immortality, and escape from Punishments, as a Matter of Right; though they have no Promise, though it is in Derision of the Methods God has appointed them to claim under. Never considering that Favour and Goodness is a *free* Thing in all its Dispensations, where it is unconfined by Covenant. Would they acknowledge and embrace it, in that Way of Covenant, they have indeed a just Claim to it; but as long as they wilfully disdain the Covenant, and the Condition thereof, Justice forbids them any Benefit of it.

THEY think it is no Injustice in God to pardon Sin in their Way, and therefore depend upon him for it: By which, they fondly mean, it would be no Injustice or Injury to *themselves* to receive his Pardon and Favour. But have they any just Claim to it? If not, they are guilty of Injustice against God in entertaining such an unjustifiable Hope against the Reason of all Hope. Is it not undeniable Justice in God so far to regard the Terms and Conditions of his own Favour, as to debar them from it, who wilfully reject the other? Our Author² assigns the Cause of our Happiness being limited, because our Reason is so: God alone has unlimited Reason and Happiness: If then our Reason is limited, and consequently our Happiness, why so inconsistent, as not to allow God's superior Reason to direct us to our greatest Happiness; and not accept of his Revelation, in the Use of our Reason, as our only Pilot to Heaven? Since the *written Word and Reason* of God in the Use of our Faculties, is a sure and steadfast Guide, in all Necessaries; whilst the unwritten Reason that comes from him, on

Account

Account of its promiscuous Ignorance, Vagrancy, and Unsettledness, refusing to consult the only Pilot, the *living Way*, that came from thence, must ever rove with random Fluctuation in the wide Ocean of Nature, neglected, unpity'd by Heaven; or should they arrive by the Prerogative of a Supposition at that Coast, the Coast thereof would know them not.

But the like ungrounded, fond Notion of the Goodness of God, wherein they superstitiously indulge themselves, seduces them into a Disregard, if not utter Disbelief of any *positive* future Punishments, in another Life. But Laws without the Sanction of Punishment annexed would be no more than so many Intreaties of the sovereign Power, promulg'd to its respective Subjects; having no Power to command, and without any Prospect of being obey'd. Or, if Punishment was annex'd and threaten'd, but not put in Execution, it would have the same Effect: Every Iniquity would be encouraged that could disturb the Enjoyment, or threaten the Dissolution of the Community; and the sovereign Authority would become guilty of those Crimes it took no Care to restrain. There is an Account of one, who, 'having begg'd for a Pardon of the *King of France* for the *Seventh Murder* he was guilty of, and finding he could not obtain it, boldly told the *King*, that he would own only the *first Murder* to be his own proper *Action*; and that the *Imputation* of all the rest must lie upon the *King* himself; for that he should never have committed the other, if the *King* had not given him *Encouragement*, by pardoning the *first*.'

As

As there are more disposed to be wicked than good, in all Governments; not only the Commination of Pains and Penalties, but the due *Execution* of them, must ever continue the principal Sanction of Law, as that will ever be the Nerves and Support of the Governor's Authority. It is that only obtains the true End of Punishment; which is to be a *Terror to evil Doers*. Infliction of Evil has greater Force and Power over Mens Minds, than Hope of Reward; because the first makes their present Condition worse, which is a dreadful Thing; whilst the other serves only to better it, which will operate the less, the more they are contented with it.

THAT Punishment, which is for Correction and Amendment of the Offender, is not remitted or abated by what *Christ* suffer'd for us; for that Rod still continues in the Hand of our loving Father to be used upon Occasion of doing us good: It was only needful to take away that which proceedeth from his *Wrath*, after a sufficient Probation of us, final and never ceasing; to be pronounced upon the incorrigible by the Mouth of Goodness itself. And they who are so wise to escape it, will see so much Wisdom and Love for the publick Good, in inflicting it, that they will not have the least Grief or Regret for the eternal Loss and Suffering of their nearest Relation here.

SEEING the Punishment of Vice, which ariseth ordinarily out of the natural Consequences of Things, called the *natural* Punishment or Inconvenience of it, is frequently postpon'd, and the natural Tendency of such a Cause often interrupted,

rupted, and the Effects no less frequently eluded in this Life; and considering Wickedness and Vice are prosperous, merry and triumphant, and fall into no Misfortune like other Men; the natural Notions Men have, by common reasoning upon the Divine Rectitude, and upon the essential Justice of God, as a Governor, so necessary to limit his Goodness, at one Time or other; have every where agreed as a common Dictate of Reason, to establish some *positive* Retributions *hereafter*, for every Sinner according to his Deservings.

If then the Persuasion of future *positive* Punishments is as necessary in the Belief of natural Religion, as that God is Governor and Judge of human Actions; Why does our Author¹ fall out with Revelation, for making that still more certain; and for making it what it ought to be, more effectual, by representing it as *endless*? Whilst he would have all future *positive* Punishment, (as well in Contradiction to natural, as reveal'd Religion) to be 'Cruelty, Malice, Spite, Wrath, Revenge:' No, they won't bear to hear of any Punishment sufficiently certain, and sufficiently great, to be a counterbalance to the Desires and Temptations to Sin, in this Life. But God, who knows the Nature whereof we are made better than these Men, and without ever consulting them, any farther, than they will please to consult their own Breast, whether the Fear of such Evil is not the first Wisdom of our Nature, has therefore made the *Fear of himself the beginning of Wisdom*, and to depart from Sin and Evil, to be their first Understanding.

H E

HE lays hold of that powerful Principle of *Self-Preservation* within us, to oblige us, by any Means, to be good, wise, and happy ; and, if the Love of Goodness, Wisdom, and Happiness can't prevail, (as they can't possibly in the Nature of Things prevail, at first, over habitual Sinners) to drive us into that Good he intends for us ; nay, to compel us to come in, through Fear of the dread Punishments of the contrary Practices. Therefore has he in his great Wisdom and Goodness, positively acquainted us with those endless unendurable Torments, to rouse us out of that desperate Inconsideration and Lethargy, Insatiation and Insensibility, which are incident to an Habit of sinning : Not as if originally ordain'd for Man, for that would be to ordain Punishment before he had sinned, but *prepared for the Devil and his Angels* : And therefore a meet Doom and suitable Society for all those, who wilfully forsake God, and follow their Example. If the Pride of thinking better of their natural Capacity, and Endowments, than they deserv'd ; if the not acknowledging the Receipt of them to him, to the Ends of Modesty and Contentment with the Divine Dispensations towards them ; if the thinking so highly of their own Reason and Sufficiency, as to set them upon arguing with the most High, for a higher Station than they were placed in, was their Ruin, others had Need to stand in Fear.

AND the Reason our Author there alledges against such Punishments, *viz.* ' Because God in doing Acts of Justice, acts purely for the Good of his Creatures,' is the very Reason why in his great Goodness, he both threatens and inflicts those

those great Punishments: So shallow a *Civilian* was he in reasoning upon Law and Punishment. For, if the Laws of God were certainly fram'd for our Good, as Directions and Qualifications for bringing us to Heaven; the more severe the Punishments annex'd for effectually deterring from Disobedience, the more he demonstrates himself to be intent upon and desirous of our Good; that we may not find it upon the Balance of the Account agreeable to any Part, or Passion of our Nature, to disappoint him of his Design of bringing us to Happiness, and to himself. *For so much then (says the Book of Wisd. xii. 15.) as thou art righteous thyself, thou orderest all Things righteously; thinking it not agreeable with thy Power to condemn him who hath not deserv'd to be punish'd.*

THEREFORE he would have us pause and consider, when a Temptation offers; whether the Pleasures of Sin which are but for a Season, tho' they have the Charms of being present, or being secret, or being some new Taste of Sin, if they must become Remorse and Bitterness in the long after-feeling of the Mind in its Repentance for complying; and without that, terminate in the *Worm of Conscience that never dies, and the Fire that never shall be quench'd*; whether the precarious Moment of Life with all its sinful, sickly Enjoyments ought to be prefer'd to a never-ending Eternity of Torture uninterrupted and Anguish unsupportable, that will come, and will not tarry! or whether the sober Thought of such an impending Danger ought not to be as terrible and tremendous in its Caution, never to repeat the same Folly of sinning, as in its Consequence it is unspeakable in the Endurance: Or whether, for that Reason, because there is no Proportion be-

tween eternal Suffering, and the vicious Pleasures of a short Life, the Deceitfulness of Sin ought not immediately to be compelled to own the Cheat, in Presence of that Dissuasion of God, and the true Nature of his Government! purposely in Grace and Mercy publish'd and imparted, as the strongest Bitt and Bridle, that can possibly be used for curbing the Will, and putting a Stop to habitual Sin! And if it has not that Effect, whether Reason can deny it to be a just Bargain of Vengeance, for the infinite Folly of rejecting the eternal Pleasures of Heaven; which courted all the Day long of present Life, and will assuredly be as commensurate to the Immortality of the Soul, as the other Endurance must be parallel to its Existence.

PLATO in *Phædon*, brings in *Socrates*, declaring, 'That those whose Sins are incurable, and have been guilty of Sacrilege or Murder, or such Crimes, are by a just and fatal Destiny, thrown headlong into *Tartarus*, where they are kept Prisoners for ever.' *Rapin* observes, that at the Time of the future Judgment, good Men shall be at the Right Hand of God, and the Wicked at the Left, from whence they shall be thrown down into the *Abyss*, and into outward Darkness, bound Hand and Foot; where they shall be tormented, and torn by Spirits, which he calls Fire, and where nothing shall be heard but horrible groaning and howling.

AND this being a Separation from all Happiness, which was the End of Man's Existence, is called the *second Death*, as the Separation of Soul and Body, the End of all Temporal Happiness, is the first Death. And if there remains no more

Sacrifice

Sacrifice for Sin after Death, and the guilty Remorse inseparably adheres to the Soul, and that Soul is naturally immortal ; it follows from the Deist's own Concession of the Punishment of Sin by *natural Consequence*, that it must be as durable as the Soul. Temporal Punishments from God, are medicinal and remissible ; but both by the Tenor of the Sentence, and the Nature of Things, (supposing no Annihilation, which is a groundless Hope) a State of endless *Despair* in eternal Banishment from all Happiness, from any more Hope of Probation ; in Company of the Devil and his Angels, who have despair'd ever since their Fall ; and that Despair of Pardon and Felicity has been the Cause of their incessant Malice against Souls ; which accumulates their Guilt, and ripens them for that everlasting Fire prepared for them ; where the Tempter and Tempted will burn with tormenting Rage against God, and one another, for evermore.

AND if the undone Reason of the Sufferer will not acquit the Goodness of God, the Reason of every Body else must plainly acknowledge the Fitness, and Justice of that Infliction upon the incorrigible Sinner. For, since the previous Acquaintance of it could not accomplish its ardent Desire of saving from eternal Woe and Ruin, the actual Infliction of it will be justify'd, if not out of Mercy and Kindness to the Sufferer, (who has render'd himself incurable, and *incapable* of any) still out of superior loving Kindness to the Community ; that since they beforehand knew this very Judgment of God, wrapp'd up in the Covenant of Mercy, and knew that their thinking God to be *Austere* in threatening it, would be only the *condemning themselves out of their own Mouth* ; if it had

had not its due Influence and Intention in doing good to themselves, in seasonably redeeming the mis-spent Time of a former Conversation, considering the Use and Value of Time, the Influence and Dread of that Terror of the Lord for working out their own Salvation; they will for ever and ever serve to do good unto others; by becoming a Monument of Vengeance for confirming the Righteous more sure and steadfast in their State of Glory: And because the Happiness of one is intended to be everlasting for the better securing of that, the Misery of the other is ordained to be as lasting.

For it is reasonable to think, that as their free Will was conducted to Heaven by the Influence of rational Motives; so still remaining a mutable free Will, like the Angels, it is capable of being confirmed more and more in its Choice, by Experience, and by the ever-operating Strength of such righteous Examples of God's Displeasure: There being many Passages in Scripture, exempting the Righteous hereafter from Sorrow, Pain and Labour; but not one that insures them from a Possibility of sinning any more. Doctor *Whitby* observes of the Spirits of just Men made perfect, *Heb. xii. 23.* that it signifies either that they had fulfill'd their Course, and so rested from their Labours and Conflicts; or to be perfectly purg'd from all Guilt of Sin, and so fitted to be admitted to this Kingdom. And as the Fall and Punishment of Angels is the Confirmation of other Angels in their happy State; so the eternal Punishment of wicked Men will be the eternal Establishment of the Righteous in Glory, and both may continue eternal Monuments of Disobedience, and Divine Displeasure, perhaps, to

many other Systems of intelligent Agents created to Probation in *Body*, or without.

AND the Number of unhappy Sufferers may be no more to the other Systems of rational Agents, than the Executions at *Tyburn* are to the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*. And if the good Government of those Cities find it necessary to make those Examples, as a *Terror to others* against opposing the Government, and breaking the Laws of Order and Enjoyment, Why may not the eternal Governor of the great City, whose Builder and Maker is God, governing rational free Agents, according to their Nature, make eternal Examples of some, *to the Terror of others*, who might have chosen Obedience and Happiness, and were assisted in the Choice; and yet wilfully preferred Rebellion to his Laws, and Opposition to his most wise Administration to general Happiness; and still, notwithstanding those Instances of Displeasure, preserve, and, with more Respect as a Governor, fix his Character of *Optimus Maximus*? Suppose there are ten Thousand, or ten Thousand times ten Thousand *Arch-Angels*, and that they are the *Principalities over Powers*, powerful Societies, *one* Arch-Angel the DEVIL with his Clan of rebellious Angels, fallen and kept to the Judgment of the great Day, might be an eternal Beacon to all the Hosts of Angels. So the Sons of Perdition among the Children of Men, who make themselves Children and Imitators of that Apostate from God, may be a Terror, and yet be but few in Comparison of the innumerable Societies and Systems, which may be influenc'd by their exemplary Punishment. Any other Notion of Hell, whether of the learned or unlearned, exclusive of Annihilation, seems to be no other

than a *Purgatory* of a shorter or longer Duration. If there was any Hope in Hell, so much as the Hope of the Mercy of Annihilation, it would not be Hell, but a *Purgatory*. But then that hopeless State of the damn'd, serves to this very good End of Wisdom, in confirming the happy in their Duty in Heaven, in raising their Gratitude to God for their Redemption, and the Sense of their own Joys to a higher Pitch.

AND thus Justice and Mercy in the Divine Government, as well as in all other Governments, relate to different Subjects; Justice to private Persons is both Justice and Mercy to the Publick; the Good of the whole being evermore the Measure of the Good of every Person in particular; whatever is thus ordered for the Good of the whole, is best in Wisdom, best in Justice, best in Goodness for that whole. And though the noble Author of the *Characteristicks*, Vol. 1. pag. 40. allows of no such Inference, yet it directly follows from his own Position. 'If there be a general Mind, it can have no particular Interest: But the general Good, or Good of the Whole, and its own private Good, must of Necessity be one and the same. It can intend nothing besides, nor aim at any Thing beyond, nor be provoked to any Thing contrary. So that we have only to consider, whether there be really such a Thing as a *Mind which has relation to the whole*, or not. For if unhappily there be no *Mind*, we may comfort ourselves, however, that Nature has no Malice: If there be really a *Mind*, we may rest satisfy'd that it is the best natur'd one in the World.' That Mind may be, and is free from all Malice, and the best natur'd in the World, in the best Methods of Govern-

ment; and the Punishment of the Wicked continue notwithstanding; because it implies no *Imperfection* in such a Governor. For Mercy and Pity in God has its *Time* and *Season*, and are not in him, as in ourselves, a Passion, but a Perfection of the highest Reason and Equity, becoming the best Government of the Universe. Nor is it any Defect of Goodness, much less Malice, to suffer those contumacious Subjects to be for ever miserable, who would never be prevailed with in their Life-time, to submit to the Government of their Maker, nor accept of a Pardon in their Redeemer, so as to qualify themselves for eternal Blessedness.

THEIR petulant Objections and ungrounded Mistakes of the Goodness of their supreme Governor, contrary to the Nature of Government, and the Design of Punishment, led them willingly into the Disbelief of these Punishments; to excuse themselves from having any Regard to the Divine Displeasure; though they are no more than necessary Effects and judicial Endurances of it, flowing even from Goodness itself. Goodness unfear'd, and abused to Contempt, from the best Friend becomes the most exasperated Enemy. Besides, if the *penal* Evil, derived from this abused Goodness, was not *final* and *conclusive*, or not so great as represented in Scripture, what Occasion for God's waiting so long to be gracious, or for the Praises of long-suffering Mercy? God knows what will be the Event of his long suffering, but that has no more Effect upon the Choice of the Will, than if he did not know it; the Man is indulged in longer Probation to lay up Wrath, or Blessing, as he likes. And agreeably to the common Reason of all Men, and to the

Nature and Design of capital final Punishment, being a *Terror to others*, to prevent in them a future Breach of the Law, the Good of the *Sufferer* is not intended by *that* Punishment, but, as a Mark of *publick Resentment*, the Good of the *Publick* only; because such Punishment from the Governor of Society, looks forward as well as backward, and consequently that the End of *such* Punishment is not solely the Amendment of the Sufferer, as our Author has falsely asserted. But as he there drops the Curtain, so I drop the Argument.

AND now, if according to the Test of our Author's own erecting, for judging what is true Religion, *viz. what makes most for the Honour of God, and the Good of Men*; it has appear'd by various Arguments, that it makes most for the Honour of God as a Governor, and the common Good of Men as the Society governed, that future Rewards and Punishments should be dispensed according to the covenanted Method revealed in the Gospel, and no otherwise, where it is sufficiently promulg'd, (especially since the Degrees of both will be proportion'd to the respective Degrees of Obedience, and Disobedience, and distributed by the Hands of the *Mediator* of that Covenant, the appointed Judge of our Behaviour); and if that Method of written Laws, Privileges, and Conditions, best ascertains the Knowledge of Obedience in all necessary Particulars, and the Expectation of the governed in all that can concern their Hopes, and Fears, to their unspeakable Comfort and Satisfaction, under that Divine Government; as well as to the singular Glory and Illustration of all the Divine Attributes, as will further appear afterwards. If

the *contrary* Supposition of the *Goodness* of God, depreciates the Honour and Wisdom of the Divine Government ; loosens the Bands of Obedience, and renders it precarious, and destitute of proper Assistance ; and in all due reasoning upon, and Experience of Law and Government for the Good of the Community, is false and superstitious ; if it affords no Assurance of Remission of Sins to Repentance and Amendment grafted upon that Presumption, in Contempt of the revealed Method of ascertaining it ; and if neither the Death of Christ as a bare Witness, and a mere Testimony that God is of a reconcilable Disposition to repenting Sinners ; nor yet the Republication of the Law of Nature, are to be depended upon for Remission of Sins, and eternal Life : Then it follows, that *Deism*, in a Christian Country, is destitute of all Support of Reason, and rational Comfort ; that it is absolutely false in its Foundation : And 'tis to be hoped, upon serious Consideration of the same, will die away at the Root, and revive no more amongst us.





C H A P. XI.

The PRIESTLY Office of our Mediator upon Earth continued.

I Proceed to the *second* Thing proposed, to shew what is the Method laid down in Scripture, to be depended upon for Salvation, the Remission of Sins, and eternal Life: And that is the DEATH of the Mediator. He was to suffer Death not as a Martyr to the Truth of God's reconcilable Disposition to Sinners; that Disposition was evident enough in his appointing such a Person, and sending him into the World; but as the *Mediator* of the new Covenant, who by suffering in our Stead the Punishment due to our Sin, undertook to accomplish thereby an *actual, full, perfect* Reconciliation between God and Man. Thus it is represented. *For this Cause he is the Mediator of the new Testament, that by Means of Death for the Redemption of the Transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the Promise of eternal Inheritance: For where a Testament is, there must also of Necessity be the Death of the Testator. For a Testament is of Force, after Men are dead, otherwise it is of no Strength at all while the Testator liveth*¹. The same Word which is translated Testament, in other Places signifies Covenant; which, according to

X 4

Whitby,

¹ Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17.

Whitby, as it was sealed with, and confirmed by his Blood, procuring for us such Blessings as he by his Will design'd for, and declared should be conferred upon Believers *through Faith in his Blood*, became also a *Testament*. That the Word should every where be render'd *Covenant*, not *Testament*; and that there is no Necessity for translating it *Testament* in this Place, in case *Testator* implies *Pacifier*: See *Peirce's Notes*.

As he was the Son of God who loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity against his Father, that induced him to undertake our Redemption from all Iniquity, and gain a new Probation, to make us a peculiar People zealous of good Works.

It became him to make the Captain of our Salvation *Perfect* through suffering, or tasting Death for every Man. It does not say, there was no other Way possible for the Salvation of Sinners. But what is more to the Purpose, if that Method best became the *Grace*, *Wisdom*, and *Power* of God, we may be very sure, it was in itself the *best*, the *wisest*, and the most *honourable* that could be pitch'd upon. For nothing but what is most Divine and Beneficial in Goodness, most sublime and adorable in Wisdom, most influential and awful in Legislature and Government, could become God to propose, or the Mediator to undertake, or Man to receive the Benefit of, in that Affair.

It is enough (In the Opinion of the impartial Mr. *Lock*) to justify the Fitness of any Thing to be done, by resolving it into the *Wisdom*.

dom of God, who has done it; whereof our narrow Understandings, and short Views, may utterly incapacitate us to judge. We know little of this visible, and nothing at all of the State of that intellectual World; wherein are infinite Numbers and Degrees of Spirits out of the Reach of our Ken or Guess; and therefore know not what Transactions there were between God and our Saviour, in Reference to his Kingdom. We know not what need there was to set up a Head and a Cheiftan, in Opposition to the *Prince of this World, the Prince of the Power of the Air, &c.* And we shall take too much upon us, if we shall call God's Wisdom or Providence to Account, and pertly condemn for needless, all that our weak, and, perhaps, bias'd *Understandings*, cannot account for¹. Yet, in this particular Case, the Wisdom and Goodness of God has shewn itself so visibly to common Apprehensions, that it hath furnish'd us abundantly wherewithal to satisfy the Curious and Inquisitive; who will not take a Blessing, unless they be instructed, what need they had of it, and why it was bestowed upon them².

THE making the Captain of our Salvation Perfect through suffering Death, was, that which made him a *perfect* Mediator in Office, as he was before perfectly qualify'd in his Person and Nature to go through with it. And thus as the Law of God obliging to Obedience was wisely laid in the Nature and Reason of Things, so the Divine Method of pardoning Transgression and recovering to Obedience, through a Mediator, is likewise founded in the Nature and Fitness of Things;

¹ Reasonableness of Christian. pag. 255. ² Pag. 256.

Things ; not discoverable indeed to our Reason without the Help of Revelation : But when that open'd the Treasures of Wisdom and Mercy in saving Sinners ; it, at the same Time, shews how perfectly well the Mediator consults the Nature of God, and the present Nature of Man, in erecting the best Kingdom and Government that can possibly subsist between them.

WHEREUNTO all that subject themselves by the Invitations of the most reasonable Faith in the Mediator, find Mercy and Justice, and all the Institutes and Appointments of Heaven, dispens'd not by arbitrary Will, but directed by the Measures of the highest Reason and Wisdom ; the natural Inclinations, which Reason suggests, of the Divine Goodness to pardon penitent Sinners, reconciled to the natural Engagements of Justice, not to let Sin go unpunish'd, by a most surprizing Policy and Godlike Contrivance for the Good of Man, as much beyond the Capacity of his Reason to have found out, as it is beyond his Desert ; wherein *Mercy and Truth, Righteousness and Peace* match'd together, and have *kissed each other*.

WHEREIN all that is in the Power and Nature of Man is superintended and directed to his greatest Comfort in this World, and to his endless Happiness in the next. His Reason exalted to a Coincidence with his Faith, and improved to the best Government over all his Faculties ; his Passions regulated to the embracing the most amiable recompensing Good ; and to the shunning the most seriously deform'd, and dreadfully revenging Evil ; his Repentance and Devotion animated with the most cordial Invitations, and Acceptableness

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to God, in the Joy and Communion of the Holy Ghost, to the greatest chearing of the Heart, and to the best Settlement of the Peace of Conscience; and the Obedience of his Actions guided by Laws and Helps purposely ordain'd for the perfecting his Nature here in Holiness, that it may be perfected in Happiness hereafter.

As the Foundation of that Faith in the Mediator is laid in the reveal'd Union of the Divine and Human Nature, Son of God, and Son of Man, personally dying for the Sins of the World, rising from the dead, and interceding in Heaven for us. The Reasons of his *Death*, and the saving Efficacy of his *Blood shedding*, are express'd by *his dying for us, bearing our Sins*, or the Punishment of them¹. By being an *Offering, Propitiation, Sacrifice*, for our Sins, and we receiving the Attonement². His Blood shed for *putting away, taking away, cleansing, washing, purifying, purging, remitting* of Sins³. And with respect to the *Value* of his precious Blood, and our *Captivity* under Sin and Satan, by *purchasing, ransoming, and redeeming* us⁴. And the happy Effects, upon the easy Conditions of Faith, Repentance, and Amendment, are represented by being *pardon'd, reconciled, having our Peace made with God, justified, sanctified, and receiving the Promise* of

¹ Heb. ii. 9. 1 John iii. 16. Rom. iv. 25. 1 Cor. xv. 3. Isa. iii. 4. 5. 6. Heb. ix. 29. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

² Rom. iii. 25. v. 11. 1 John ii. 2. iv. 10. Rom. viii. 13. Heb. ix. 26. Eph. v. 2.

³ Heb. ix. 26. 1 John iii. 5. i. 17. Rev. i. 5. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. i. 3. Mat. xxvi. 28.

⁴ Heb. ix. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Mat. xx. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 1 Pet. v. 9. Rev. v. 9.

of eternal Inheritance, by the Redemption of the Body, as well as the Soul¹.

AND this seems to be the true Key of *Cb. vi.* of *St. John*, concerning eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood, or *digesting* and *imbibing* his Heavenly Doctrines. For as all his particular Doctrines as Mediator may be summ'd up in, and receive their Force from his offering his Body and Blood unto Death upon the Cross; to digest and imbibe that, by a continual Remembrance of what gave Life to the World, by eating and drinking the commemorative Bread and Wine, is the same thing as to digest and imbibe all his other Doctrines to the Health and Nutriment of the Soul. That eating and drinking Wisdom, *Eclus. xxiv. 21.* is truly and indeed to the Soul, eating and drinking *that Wisdom from above*, which actually descended from Heaven..

IT was necessary to take Human Nature upon Him, that he might taste Death for every Man in the same Nature that sinned. Such a Body was therefore prepared for him, that he who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified may be one in Nature; and as the Children were Partakers of Flesh and Blood, so was He; that he might destroy him who had the Power of Death, *i. e.* the Devil: And so vanquishing him in the same Nature that he had before vanquish'd, might regain the Life of the Body and Soul to eternal Life.

THE

¹ *Eph. i. 7. iv. 32. Rom. v. 2. Col. i. 20, 21. 2 Cor. v. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. iii. 14. v. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. x. 10. 2 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 2. 1 Cor. i. 30. Heb. ix. 15. Rom. viii. 23.*

THE Devil was a Murtherer from the Beginning, and the Captain of that Sin that brought Death into the World. For reducing of him, and all his Host of Devices, and to make an Antidote of that Death which the other design'd for eternal Poyson, our *Jesus* became Captain of Life and Salvation, and beat and confounded him at his own Play. He thought, by introducing Death, he had sweetly glutted his own Malice in the irreparable Destruction of the Human Race; but by the very Means of Death our Mediator destroyed his Design; and raised Life, Life eternal, of greater Advantage and higher Degree, out of it, for the Good of Man, and the Glory of God's Mercy, Righteousness, and Wisdom: For it was the Glory of God to conquer the Devil, as well as Man, in every Step of that Dispensation, by Wisdom and Righteousness, more than with Power, which nothing can resist. He led Captivity captive, by triumphing over Death, and conquer'd the chief Captain of all Pride, by the Humiliation of himself to Man. And the Goodness and Mercy of God to Man, in leading Man to Repentance by that Method, was all the Conquest he aim'd at over Man, for relinquishing the usurp'd Dominion of Sin and the Devil.

It was not possible, nor fit, *i. e.* morally possible in the Nature of Things, that the Blood of Bulls or of Goats, nor yet of Angels, (had they any)

Si enim Homo non vicisset inimicum Hominis; non iustus esset inimicus. Rursus autem nisi Deus donasset salutem, non firmiter haberemus eam, & nisi Homo coniunctus fuisset Deo nostro, non potuisset particeps fieri incorruptibilitatis.
Iren. L. III. cap. 20.

any) should take away the Sins of *Man*; because neither of them had a Nature conscious of his Sin, nor capable of being guilty of it, and therefore incapable of suffering the Pains of Death for it, or of vindicating the Justice of God in inflicting that Punishment upon the transgressing Nature of Man; or of being an Example and Warning to him against the Presumption of breaking the Divine Laws. Was God an arbitrary Being, it was very possible for the Blood of Bulls, &c. to take away Sins; but as he conducts himself by the true Constitution and Reason of Things it was impossible it should. Nor could any other Nature furnish the High Priest of our Profession with the proper *feeling* of our Infirmities, and intended Sympathy with our Sufferings, to enable Him to become a *compassionate* High Priest for us.

NOR was it necessary for him to be undefiled, harmless, separate from Sinners, in order to die as a *Martyr*; for what Martyr was ever free from the Guilt of some personal Sins? But to die as a *Mediator*, or suffer as a Substitute in the Sinner's stead, he must of Necessity have no Sins of his own to atone for, because that would effectually bar the Sufficiency of his Attonement for the Sins of others, at the same time. And because perfectly innocent and free from all Sin of his own; no Power, no, not of his Father, could with any Justice take away his Life.

BUT having a previous inherent Right and Power over his own Life, to lay it down, and take it again; He voluntarily made a free Will Offering of it; at the same time God the Father was at liberty to accept, or refuse the Oblation, however

however generous it was. The vindictive Justice of the Law insisted upon the Punishment of the Sinner in *propria Persona*. But then as the End of his Law and Government was the Obedience of his Subjects, and the Probation-end of Punishment was the securing that Obedience, and the securing that was the establishing the Law and Government in its full Strength, and asserting the Honour and Dignity of the Legislator to the highest regard of Submission; if the Punishment might be transferr'd upon one willing to undergo it, so as no Injustice be done to a third Person, in the Thoughts of Mercy to redeem the Sinner from Death; and if the Person so ready to sustain it, and stand between us and Destruction, is also of that super-eminent Dignity, as that the indispensable Suffering laid upon Him, would prove an effectual Terror to all reasonable Men, against repeating their Transgressions any more, and so recovering their bounden Duty and Obedience to the Law: What should hinder God, who in the midst of Judgment thinketh upon Mercy, from accepting a Method of pardoning and saving Sinners, so glorious to his innate Mercy, and to his essential Love of the World? And as He was pleased to accept it, when he was in no respect of Law or Justice obliged to do so, that render'd his forgiving Sin, in that manner, an Act of *Mercy, Grace, free Grace, and rich*. And to that very *Grace of God* is the Permission and Acceptance of the Death of the Mediator imputed, *Heb. xi. 9.* that He, *by the Grace of God*, might taste Death for every Man. So *John iii. 16.* 1 *John iv. 9.* For the original *Promise* in Paradise was of *Grace*, and therefore every thing that follow'd after in that whole Dispensation must be of *Grace* likewise, exclusive of Debt
in

in the Sense of *Merit* on Man's Part, in every Article.

○ WHATEVER the Sacrifice is, how valuable or costly soever, still it is the *Acceptance* of God, the offended Party, that must admit of that Exchange, or allow it to be *vicarious*, or receive it in Exemption of, and in Propitiation for the guilty Sinner; that he may enjoy the saving Benefit and Efficacy thereof, by being personally releas'd from having his Trespases and its Wages imputed to him, or having his Sins and Iniquities remember'd any more. The Suffering of the innocent, though in the same Nature, can no otherwise become an Expiation for the Soul that sinneth; because the Suffering of another not being the Suffering of the Person that sinned; the Obligation of the Law, which exacts, and marks out the Punishment of the Sinner in Person, had been disregarded; unless the Legislator, who had the Power of dispensing with his own Laws, so as best to procure Obedience, and secure the Ends of their Institution, had been pleased to wave his own Right, and relax his own Law, by the interposal of his Grace and Mercy, *admit* the Suffering, and *accept* of the Punishment of one, in lieu of the other, of the more worthy, willing Mediator *Christ Jesus*, instead of criminal, guilty Man, the Just for the Unjust.

So that though the Pardon of Man's Sins is issued *through Christ*, and granted for the *Sake*, and Consideration of his Sufferings, it is nevertheless, with respect to Man, a free, gratuitous Pardon, and a special, undeserved, unobligated Act of Grace; and the Sinner is as much obliged to Mercy, as if there was no Christ, but
by

by taking that Method, and sending his Son, the Love and the Mercy is so much the more enhans'd. It appears by right Reason in the Book of *Job*, who was a *Deist*; that though God is in himself of a placable and propitious Disposition, yet, when he is displeased, He insists upon one to intervene between himself and the Offender, *with Sacrifice*, whom He thinks proper to accept, before He will become *actually* reconciled with the Offender. *My Anger* (said he to *Eliphaz*) *is kindled against thee, and thy two Friends; because ye have not spoken of me the Things that are right, as my Servant Job. Therefore take unto you now seven Bullocks, and seven Rams, and go to my Servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a Burnt-Offering, and my Servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept, his Face or Person, as in the Margin; lest I deal with you after your Folly*, ch. xlii. 7, 8. He was so appeasable and good as to appoint the *Means* to his Favour, but would not however be *actually* appeas'd, till the Sacrifice was first offer'd by *Him*, whom He appointed; and because appointed, therefore only to be accepted. They might have thought from the Apprehensions they had of his natural Goodness, that Repentance had been sufficient to pacify Him. But we see how vain are such Thoughts, and how contrary to God's Thoughts.

If the Mediator is consider'd as the *Surety* of the Covenant, as He is stiled, and God the Father as a *Legislator*, all Difficulties vanish. Suppose at the Creation of our World, He, who is called *the Lamb slain from the Foundation of it*, in giving such a Talent to the new Creature Man, as Liberty and Freedom of Will, by the abusing

of which in breaking the Law, God might be dishonoured, (as He had been before by the fallen Angels) should engage with God, as our *Surety*: That all we his Creatures should not apostatize from his Government; He that made them under God, and endow'd them with that religious Faculty would undertake for that.

Now in Virtue of that *Promise* and *Undertaking* as our *Surety*, (which either then commenc'd, or we know not when it did) it was right and dutiful in the Mediator to fulfil his Engagement; and well knowing the Punishment of the Law to Disobedience, having freely bound himself as our *Surety*, it was a just Debt of Obedience in Him to his Father to come into the World, at the properest Time, to perform his Engagement, and perform it as cheerfully as he undertook it, without any Reluctance but what is natural and becoming Flesh and Blood at the Prospect of Death. And that Obedience unto Death being due to the Father in Justice of his Son's *Promise*, and in Consideration of his *Undertaking* as our *Sponsor* or *Surety*, it was right in the Father, and, as this Son was innocent, He could have no other Right to oblige him, to *appoint* that it should be so, and ordain it as his *Will* to be obey'd by Him, in dispensing his Love and Salvation to the World. It was *just* in God the Father *after* that, but not before that, to *require* so much of the Mediator, and *strictly exact* and *demand*, as he did, the Performance from Him.

AND thus the requiring Will of the Father insisting upon so much to be done, and our Lord's ready Compliance therewith, (as it is every

where represented in the Scripture) being the *Consequence*, not the Cause of the *Willingness* and heroick Goodness of his Son, our Saviour in his ante-mundane State first engaging, and after undergoing so bitter and shameful a Death for us; and this being made an Act of Counsel, it may very well be said, he was deliver'd by the determin'd Counsel of God; all the little Objections of God's glutting his *Revenge*, *Cruelty*, &c. upon his innocent Son, so often and so falsely imputed by our Author, and others of his way of thinking, to this Dispensation of God in Christ reconciling the World to himself, entirely vanish, and disappear.

FOR the Law knows neither Cruelty nor Revenge. If the Punishment of Sin is Death, and so justly due to it as to be called its *Wages*, had we suffer'd the Punishment in Person, it had neither been Cruelty nor Revenge in God; how then should it take that Denomination, when translated upon another, with his own Consent, and in Favour to Him relax'd to a less Degree, and for a shorter time? That Punishment may be translated by a human Legislator from a guilty Person to an *innocent*, where the guilty Person is belov'd by the innocent, is clear from the applauded Instance of *Zaleucus* King of the *Locri*, who, when he had made a Law that both the Eyes of an Adulterer should be put out, and his Son being catch'd in Adultery, rather than the Law should be wholly broken, commanded one Eye of his Son, and another of his own, to be put out. And for that Fact *Val. Maximus* commends him both as a just Judge, and a merciful Father.

IF any Injustice this way, upon our Saviour, in requiring his Life as a Ransom and Sacrifice for us; it would be the same Injustice in God to send him into the World to lay down his Life as a *Testimony* to the Truth of that Doctrine, that God is reconcilable to Sinners; since He knew taking away his Life would be the Consequence of publishing of that Truth, or of shewing himself so unlike the rest of the World, as to be *perfectly righteous*. *Plato* himself acknowledges the Corruption of the World to be so prodigious, 'that if a Man *perfectly righteous* should come upon Earth, he would find so much Opposition, that we would be imprison'd, reviled, scourged, and in fine, crucified by such, who, tho' they were extremely wicked, would yet pass for righteous Men.'

WILLINGNESS and *Consent* to foreseen Sufferings take off all Imputation of Injury or Hardship towards the vicarious Sufferer. In inferior Judicatures, it is true, if an innocent Person should offer himself to Death, before a Judge of the Law, in room of one guilty and deserving of it, and had received Sentence accordingly, he could not be accepted for two Reasons, 1. Because the Person offering had no Property in his own Life, and therefore guilty of tendering what was not his own. 2. Because the Judge has no Power over an innocent Person's Life to take it away, in any respect, unless he had forfeited it to the Law by his Guilt. Was the Judge to admit of the Exchange, he himself would become a Criminal, in condemning the innocent and acquitting the guilty, in such a *subordinate* Judge it would be no less than misplacing Punishment

ment, and perverting the due Course of Justice, contrary to his Trust, and the Rule of the Law, which was to guide his Proceeding; neither has he it in his Power ever after to make a personal Amends to the Sufferer for accepting his Offer.

BUT now, if we reflect upon God as a *Legislator*, and the Mediator between Him and Man, as *having Life in himself*, a Power to lay it down, and take it up at his Liberty, no Imagination of Injustice can be ascribed to God, nor ill Usage to the Mediator as proceeding from Him. So far from that, that the *Willingness* of the Son to lay down his Life, and take it again in the Cause of Man's Salvation, was one of the particular Grounds and Reasons of the *Father's* loving him, *John* x. 17, 18. The Legislator in that Case can't be injured, nor yet despised in his Mercy of accepting the Exchange; because in lieu of the Life of the Offender, which he gives, he receives that of the *Offerer*, and that must be an Equivalent to the Justice of his Law requiring Death, and equally answers the Ends of Government, the Support of his Authority. And the *Offerer*, who can soon take up the Life he laid down, can't be injured, because for the Life which he lays down, he receives from the Legislator the *Life* of the Offender, which is dearer to him.

WHEN such a one therefore presents himself, who has a real Property in his own Life, and whose Offer is so valuable before Him, who is supreme over the Law; it is as much his Right to relax and dispense with his own Laws, as it was at first to make them; He is accountable to none: Nor has He any Rule to go by in guiding

his Proceedings with Men, but what shall most engage their Love and Esteem, their Fear and Awe of his Authority over them; and best promote their real Good and Happiness, which is his own Glory. If any Expedient therefore offers from a *third* Person that effectually answers these Ends, his Mercy and Goodness would never hesitate to close with it, as the best Course that could be taken with frail, peccant Man, for the better Observance of his Laws for the future.

THAT Passage therefore in the *Characteristicks*¹, quite mistakes the Character wherein God judges and determines: ‘Whoever thinks there is a
 ‘God, and pretends formally to believe that he
 ‘is *just* and *good*, must suppose that there is inde-
 ‘pendantly such a thing as *Justice* and *Injustice*,
 ‘*Truth* and *Falshood*, *Right* and *Wrong*; accord-
 ‘ing to which he pronounces God is *just*, *righte-*
 ‘*teous*, and *true*. If the mere Will, Decree,
 ‘or Law of God, is said absolutely to constitute
 ‘Right and Wrong, then are these latter Words
 ‘of no Signification at all. For thus if each
 ‘Part of a Contradiction was affirmed for Truth
 ‘by the supreme Power, that would consequent-
 ‘ly become *true*. Thus if one Person was de-
 ‘creed to suffer for another’s Fault, the Sentence
 ‘would be *just* and *equitable*.

IN answer to this Reflection upon Christianity. We are not to estimate the Goodness or Justice of God by the Measures of the Goodness and Justice of a *subordinate* Judge in his Proceedings. For then neither Christ could have suffer’d though he had offer’d himself, nor could the Offender any way escape the Punishment of the
 Law,

¹ *Characterist.* V. II. pag. 50.

Law. But He is to be consider'd as a *Legislator*, who does not vary, but is still constant and true to the Design of Punishment, and the End of his Law, which is to have it observ'd. If it can be done one way, and not another, upon a Change of Circumstances, and a Person offers himself freely to Punishment whose Suffering answers the Design of Punishment; in that Case, the Sentence will be both *righteous* and *true*, because true to the righteous Intention of the Law; tho' it is not properly a *Sentence* on the Part of God, but a Permission in Him, that the third Person should suffer according to his own Offer. And if the Intention of Punishment, and of the Law, can be better observ'd and fulfill'd one way than another, then the Sentence is not only righteous and true, but *wise* and *merciful* moreover. So that here is no Notion of *Right* or *Wrong* inverted, as if an inferior Judge had acted. And God himself estimates, and measures out to us his own Justice, by this Dispensation: *That he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*¹, and in many Places calls this Method by the Name of *his own Righteousness*, as if he gloried in accepting defective Righteousness upon Earth, in that manner, and that manner only.

If the transferring of Punishment from the guilty Principal, to the innocent Substitute, might prove the Reformation of the guilty, and the preserving the Principal alive (to whom the personal Execution of the Punishment must be utter Ruination) the Substitute at the same time suffering no Injury, it would be so far from *misplacing* of Punishment, or *perverting* the due Course of Justice, that it would be the greatest

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Improve-

¹ Rom. iii. 26.

Improvement to both of them, that either of them could possibly receive: An Improvement that God could have added to neither of them, before Man had sinned, or before the Mediator had offer'd his Service in behalf of Man.

AND, if *admitting* Him voluntarily offering Himself to Death for redeeming Man from the Curse of the Law, the Sentence of it, would ingratiate and engraft into Man the Love of God's Name, with Resolutions of obeying him better, and enhance the Fear of offending any more; Man would be the Gainer, and God would be rejoiced at it, and the Mediator would be no loser: And so the Divine Government, which had been disorder'd by the Perverseness of Man, would go on in its due Course.

THE Mediator was so far from being a Loser by what he so lovingly suffer'd for us Men, that God was as willing as he was able, to let him find that very human Nature of his, wherein he did such shameful bitter Penance for the Sins of Men, (which should vacate and set aside all *other* Penances, Satisfactions, Masses, and Merits for Sin) recompenced and exalted to his own Right Hand; and made *Lord* and *King*, not only over all the World of *Men* quick and dead, but over all the Worlds of *Angels*, *Principalities*, and *Powers*; and over *Death*, the last Enemy that shall be subdued: And the Homage of all these is due unto Him, as a Reward of his unparallel'd Humiliation to the Death of the Cross,

THE DIGNITY of the Person suffering such Things for us, is a very awful, and affecting Consideration, and concerns us to improve in it,

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as a prime Fundamental of our Holy Religion. Thus the Scriptures would raise and exalt our religious Contemplations of his Sufferings, by the sublime Value of the Divine Nature personally united to the Human. *The Lord of Glory is said to be crucified¹; and He who was in the Form of God, humbled himself and became obedient unto the Death of the Cross², and the Church to be purchased with the Blood of God³.* Though he suffer'd what he did in his Human Nature, yet that being personally united to the Divine, and He being God as well as Man, the Value is rated, and the Denomination taken from the *principal* Nature in the Union.

Thus of the two different Natures, Soul and Body of Man, what is properly done by one, is familiarly ascribed to the other, as *touching, eating⁴, &c.* to the Soul, so *vice versa*. O thou that hearest Prayer, unto thee shall all *Flesh* come⁵, &c. Or if a Plebeian is adopted to be an Emperor, any Suffering or Indignity done to him afterwards, is enhanced from his imperial Elevation. The People estimated the Life of *David* worth more than ten Thousand of themselves⁶. Thus the Civil Law determines that a Tree transplanted from one Soil to another, and taking Root there, belongs to the Owner of that Ground; in regard that receiving Nourishment from a new Earth, it becomes as it were another Tree, though there be the same individual Root, the same Body, and the same Soul of Vegetation as before. *Plantata & confita ut solo cedant est juris constituti, cujus ratio est quod ista solo ulantur.* Grot. de Jur. Rel. & Pacis,

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 8. ² Phil. iii. 6, 8. ³ Acts xx. 28.

⁴ Lev. v. 2. ⁵ vii. 18. ⁶ Psal. lxxv. 2. ⁷ Sam. xviii. 3.

‘ *Pacis*, L. II. cap. 8. Thus the Human Nature, taken from the common Mass of Mankind, and transplanted by personal Union into the Divine, is to be reckon’d as entirely belonging to the Divine, and the Actions proceeding from it are not merely Human, but are rais’d above their natural Worth, and become meritorious.’

It is very unsafe and unbecoming the Obligations of Christians to depress the Dignity of the Mediator, or subtract from his Divine Nature, as Son of God, the next Person to the Father. Because the depressing of that, depresses

1. The Perfection of the Mediator, which was shewn before to consist in the personal Union of the Divine and Human Nature.
2. The Certainty of our Reconciliation.
3. The Wisdom of God in accepting such a Person to suffering, if a less would have suffic’d.
4. The Love of God and Christ towards us, and our reciprocal bounden Love towards them.
5. The Humility of our Lord in his Condescension.
6. The Heinousness and Demerit of Sin.
7. God’s hatred against it.
8. Our Fear of his Displeasure in committing it.
9. The Vindication of his Authority, Honour, and Dignity, and the firmer Establishment of the Divine Law and Government.
10. The Mediator’s Intercession for us.
11. His Capacity of being *King, Lord, Judge* over us.
12. Our Honour and Worship of Him.

This Persuasion gives a Confidence more than Human to our Faith, and a *supernatural* stedfast and immoveable to the Reason of the Hope that is in us, when interrogated for an Answer concerning it: And that well becoming Assurance may be added which the Apostle uses in the Hope of future

ture Glory *ἡ δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ* 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. that *this great Truth* of this great Means must needs be effectual with our own confiding Endeavours to make us *free* from the Guilt, and from the Dominion of Sin. All these practical Points are interested in this Persuasion; and operate upon Christians more, or less, in working out their Salvation, as they come up to, or recede from the Belief of his Divine Nature, as well as his Human; *Son of God*, as well as *Son of Man*.

As it was the *Will* and *Pleasure* of God the Father to redeem us by that Method of sending his only begotten Son into the World, that whoever believeth in him might have everlasting Life: So from that very Consideration and Confession of his Son's stupendous Condescension *from the Form of God*, to a Form and Fashion of a Man, a Servant of no Reputation, dying upon the Cross for our Redemption, and thereupon exalted to be *Lord over all, to the Glory of God the Father*, is our Obligation inferr'd ¹ of *working out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*; upon this exciting Ground and Motive, *because it is God who works in us*, co-operates in that Work of our Salvation by Means of the *aforesaid Faith* in us, and by the Aids of his Spirit, without whom none can say *that Jesus is the Lord* ².

THIS profound Wisdom of God in thus dispensing Salvation to the World through the Death of his Son, so much superior to, and unscrutable by the Wisdom of Man before it was revealed, is most illustrious, adorable, and convincing to his Reason, now it is revealed to his Benefit. The Treasures of this Wisdom were unsearchable
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¹ Phil. ii. 6, to the 14. ² 1 Cor. xii. 3.

to the *Angels*, who, since its Revelation to the Churches, go to School upon Earth, to look into and adore it. Man is not only saved by it, but all Points of the Divine Honour, and Justice, Law and Government are saved by it too; and not only saved, but advanced and ingratiated into all the Powers and Obligations of Man's Obedience, much deeper and surer than if God had, or would pardon all Sin without the Consideration of the Mediator's suffering the Punishment, in Expiation for the Sinner.

THE following are therefore base Reflections, and perverse Misrepresentations of the Author of *Christ. as old, &c.* as 'of a King, who, though 'he freely pardon'd his repenting Rebels, yet 'should *cause* his most loyal, and only Son to be 'put to Death to shew his Hatred to Rebellion, 'to vindicate the Honour of those Laws, which 'forbid putting an innocent Person to Death.' The Death of the Son was not after he *had* pardoned the Rebels, but an awful Inducement to the Pardon; nor did he *cause* his Death, but permitted it. Nor was it any Injury to him freely offering himself to Death, having Power over his own Life. 'That Sins freely pardon'd wanted 'an Expiation; that all was mere Mercy and 'pure Forgiveness after a full Equivalent paid'. Which have been answered before without any Mention of *Equivalents*. What follows is so gross a Misrepresentation, I forbear to repeat it.

FOR if the Intention of the Divine Law is the Spirit and Reason of the Law, as it is of all Law, God consulting that Intention in this Method; by this Method carry'd it on with wonderful
Glory,

Glory, Sagacity, and Rectitude. The Intention both of the Law, and of Punishment being to procure Obedience, such as we are capable of in our degenerate Condition, God in the first Proposal of forgiving past Sins in the Mediator, and *accepting* him as a Substitute, suffering the Punishment due to the Sinner; as Master of his own Favours, took Care to *accept* it under proper *Restrictions*, and the well known *Limitations* of *Faith*, *Repentance*, and *Amendment*: The first has Respect to the *Mediator*; the other two to the Laws of God, and our Ability of obeying.

So that Faith without Repentance and Amendment ensuing is of no Signification to the Pardon of Sins past, because Christian Faith always means *Fidelity* to Christian Works, though it is the Grace of the new Covenant or Gospel to admit Repentance and sincere Obedience, which are in every Man's Power, instead of Innocence and unfinning Obedience; yet the Foundation of that Covenant standeth sure, he that nameth the Name of Christ, let him depart from all Iniquity, by *Repentance* and *sincere Obedience*. Nor are Repentance and Amendment *without* Faith, (where the Gospel is preach'd) that Righteousness which will justify in the Sight of God, or entitle those, who resolutely depend thereon, to any Pardon of their Sins, in Derision of that Wisdom and Disdain of that Belief whereon Pardon and eternal Life are proclaim'd and promis'd. Neither of them without the other is available to Salvation: And where all three do not go together in a Christian State, they are all as good as absent. Thus the primary Intention of our Redemption is our Reformation, to redeem us from all Iniquity, and to save us from our Sins, not in our Sins. Had
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the forgiving Mercy of God in Christ descended to lower Conditions than Repentance and future Obedience, the most obstinate in Rebellion had been upon an equal Foot of Favour with those that submit to his Laws, which would put an End to the Divine Government, and reverse the very Design of creating and redeeming Man. He therefore delivers none from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, but those who accept to be deliver'd, and concur in their Endeavours to free themselves from the Dominion of it.

THERE cannot possibly be a greater Demonstration given to the World of God's Hatred and Indignation against Sin, or of the Greatness of its Guilt; since it is as legible in the Punishment of his Son, or rather more so than if the Offender himself had suffer'd; That rather than Presumptuous Iniquity should go unpunish'd, he hated it more than he loved the only begotten Son of his own Bosom. Nay, not only suffer'd him to be exposed to the Pains, and Ignominy of a temporal Death, but what seems more dreadful, and less supportable; to taste, for a short Time, some of the Horrors and Vengeance of eternal Death due unto Sinners; in the *Dereliction* of him in his Agony in the Garden, when all the infernal Powers of Darkness seem to be let loose upon his righteous Spirit, and he left to bear the whole Weight of God's Displeasure; the feeling of which, besides Tears and strong Cries, produced a preternatural Sweat of great Drops of Blood. That and that only seems to be the *Hour* he *pray'd* the Father to save him from, not the *Hour* of Death, for he was fortify'd and prepar'd for that.

IF therefore the Vengeance of one *Hour* of the Powers of Darkneſs was ſo inſupportable to him, as to require an Angel from Heaven to comfort him; how can the Sinner think of being able to bear to all *Eternity* the inexpressible Horrors and Torments of the Damn'd? Or, thinking thereon, forbear to fear and tremble into an immediate Repentance? It muſt be the greateſt Madneſs and Loſs of Reaſon to imagine, that God will ever ſpare him in his avow'd Enmity, when he ſpared not his own Son, who had never offended againſt him.

HENCE appears the Weakneſs and Impertinence of that Opinion, that *one Drop* of our Saviour's Blood was of Value ſufficient to ſave the whole World. If one Drop would have ſufficed, what Occaſion for the Effuſion of the reſt? But here lies the Miſtake; the Redemption depended not upon ſome Sufferings, or the injurious Loſs of ſome Blood, but upon the *Death* of the Mediator, and the Blood of the new Covenant is an equivalent Expreſſion to that.

BUT now, if God paſſing by this wiſe Method of ſaving Sinners had executed the Punishment upon Offenders in their utter Deſtruction, how could he have diſplay'd before Men, the Averſion of his Holineſs, and the perfect Abhorrence he bears to Sin? It could not have appear'd to Men to do them any Good, for that was too late; it might have appear'd to Angels, but that was to no Purpoſe, it could be no Example to them: They ſide ſo much already with God in the Hatred of Sin, and its ruinous Conſequences,

sequences, that the Conversion of a Sinner is a Festival to them.

If then the Execution of Personal Punishment must have been the Destruction of the human Race ; and if a Pardon proclaimed from the natural Goodness of God without any Vindication on his Part, would amount to an Act of Indemnity, or general Indulgence, for breaking his Laws, or an universal Jubilee for Joy, that Men might do so ; there is no Medium, but in a *Mediator*. And that makes all Things meet : It makes Peace in Heaven by reconciling all the Divine Attributes ; brings Peace to the Conscience on Earth, by making Peace between Heaven and Earth. It gives God an honourable Opportunity of displaying his Mercy and Goodness unto Men ; well becoming himself, and consistent with what he is, a Governor over us ; more this Way than could be done any other Way ; for any other Way we must either cease to be, or he must cease to be our Governor, as he is : Because the Safety of his Honour was to be consulted as well as the Safety and Salvation of Men. Repentance and Amendment is all that is in Man's Power ; but that is no Vindication of the Honour of the Justice that requir'd Punishment, nor of the Honour of the Wisdom and Mercy that spar'd us. Therefore the *Mediator* consulted those Honours in the first Place, by doing what he did, he supply'd what we could not do ; that he might the more oblige us to do what we can. It is not what a private Person may do in pardoning an Offender against himself ; but what becomes a *Governor* to do, with respect to his Subjects.

STILL

STILL it may be thought, if God had publish'd a general Amnesty in Compassion to the Sins of Men without any Regard to a Mediator, or his attoning Sacrifice for Sin; such a Revelation as this, the *Deists* would receive with all their Hearts; there would be no 30,000 various Readings in it; though they know in their own Consciences that no Writing of the like Antiquity could escape with less, or less material ones.

WHAT have these Authors to do with various Readings? Unless it is merely to help them to a Cavil. They profess nothing worth reading but the *moral* Part; with respect to which, their old Friend *Spinoza* himself acquits the Bible from any literal Deficiency in the least. *Hoc certa affirmare possum, me nullam animadvertisse mendam, nec Lectionum varietatem circa moralia documenta, quæ obscura aut dubia reddere potest.* Tract. Theol. Polit. cap. 9. Nor should we hear anything of their other affected Objections. They would have written in Defence of it, in full Persuasion that it became the Goodness of God to make such a Revelation to the World. But then they should have taken Care to have answer'd a few Objections which arise upon that Supposition.

1. How would they by this Method be able to shew or ascertain God's Hatred of Sin, in the Behaviour of Man; of that Sin which is a Transgression of their beloved Gospel the Law of Nature? A Kind of Hatred, perhaps, they don't much care to hear of, though it is as demonstrable by the Light of Reason as that Light is contrary to Darkeness, and Sweet to Bitter, and as

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necessary to be believed by all those who would pay an unfeign'd Respect and Obedience to that Law. And as just and indispensable in God's Inspection over Mens Actions, as it is to regard himself, to be what he is, pure, and holy; and their iniquitous Proceedings, as what they really are; not all alike odious in Degree, but as they differ, and exceed in Circumstances of Turpitude and Injury.

THIS Hatred of Sin is as consistent with his Love of the Sinner, as in a Parent is blended the pure Love of his Child with the perfect Hatred of his ruinous Courses. And every wilful Sinner, before he is harden'd, has this Testimony within himself of the Divine Dislike of his Ways, because they are against the Approbation of his own Mind, much more against God's; the Frame and Design of his own Nature remonstrate against them, much more the Author and Father of his Nature.

THE Turpitude is great enough without any Occasion for the quarrellsome Doctrine of the *Infinity* of Sin. In a philosophical Sense, there is certainly great Impropriety in such an Idea: For then all Sins would be equal. And if every Sin is therefore infinite because it is a Transgression of a Law of God who is infinite, then every Virtue in Obedience to his Laws would be infinite likewise. But as we read of the *great* and *least* Commandments, (which supposes others of a middle Nature) we may be sure there are Degrees and Inequalities in Virtue, and consequently by the Rule of Contraries, in Sin, and therefore not infinite. If it is meant in a *retorical* or *aggregate* Sense, that the wilful Sins of particular Persons,

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or the Sins of the whole World, are so enormously odious to, and devious from the original Pattern, the *Holiness* of God, as nothing less could suffice, in Wisdom, to expiate their Guilt, or repair the violated Honour, the Sin of Man being a Breach of the Relation we stand in to the Attribute of *Holiness*, of the Divine Legislator; or vindicate the Authority of his Laws, and the justness of his Punishments, than the Death of his Son; it is a very true Sense, and therefore very religious: So that it is the *Justice* of God's *Punishment* in making the Wages of Sin to be Death, that thereby receives Propitiation, Attonement, expiatory Sacrifice, Ransom, or, as it is commonly called, Satisfaction for the Punishment remitted to the believing penitent Sinners. Though it was the same Thing to the Care and Wisdom of the Legislator, whether that *penal* Debt was paid by the Debtor, or by his Surety, provided the End and Design of his Laws was answer'd; yet it not being the same Thing to us; but as different as Salvation is to Destruction, it was an Act of *Mercy* to us to *accept* of the Surety, in Lieu of the Debtor; at the same Time the Demands of Justice, which might have objected to that Method, were conditionally cancelled against us by the Surety. It is a very improper Expression to talk (as some do) of our Saviour's *accepting* the Office of being Mediator; because it is the Creditor who *accepts* of the Surety; and he, to whom the Sacrifice is offer'd, not the Offerer, who *accepts* it.

THE less Displeasure Men apprehend in God against their Deviations from his Laws, the more their corrupt Inclination unavoidably increases to the Repetition of them; and the easier and cheaper the Terms whereon they fancy he will be

reconciled, the less Necessity is there for parting with their darling Irregularities ; the more Encouragement they will certainly take to continue in them, with Greediness, and without any disquieting Concern about the Displeasure of so good natur'd a Being. This is a polite genteel Sort of Religion after their own Heart, offering little Interruption to Vice, or Disturbance to Lusts, which they persuade themselves not to be displeasing to God for that Reason, because he receives no Injury from them ; such a Scheme they think worthy to come from him ; and in a wrong Meaning, can, with our Author¹, quote *Job* and *Esdras* ; for that, *If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him ? Or if thy Transgressions are multiply'd, what doest thou unto him ? What is Man that thou shouldest take Displeasure at him ? Or what is a corruptible Generation, that thou shouldest be so bitter towards it ?*

BUT their Brother Deists, the antient and modern *Heathens*, from the Light of Nature, had quite different Notions of the Deity ; being in their religious Applications universally impress'd with a Sense of his *Displeasure* against Sin, and a Fear of his Justice in punishing for it, though it wrought no Repentance ; and of their own Unworthiness to approach, and Incapacity to atone him without Sacrifices, and Mediators many. They wander'd accordingly with great Anxiety of Mind in Shadows and Darkness, wishing for Instruction and Revelation from Heaven. Whilst the Christian Deists (if I may call them so who live in a Christian Country) enjoy the Light and the Substance of the one true Mediator, and his only Sacrifice for Sin ; but come not to the Light, because their Deeds are Evil ; they love those Deeds,

Deeds, and therefore they hate a Religion which gives such evident Marks and Demonstrations of God's Hatred of Sin.

2. How does any *positive* Punishment of Sin appear in their Scheme? Where there is no Punishment annex'd, the Law of Virtue and good Morals is no more than an Intreaty, and Letter of Request to the Subjects, (as was shewn before) and if it is not positively threaten'd to be inflicted, there appears no positive Concern in the Governor, whether his Laws are obey'd, or not. Punishment is the Language and Reason that authoritatively convinces those Passions of incogitent Sinners, which govern them more than their Understanding, and make them the Slaves they are to their Sins. And the Sufferance of eternal Vengeance is ordained as an effectual counterbalance to the Violence of their sensual Passions and Appetites, to arrest their wrong Choice, and set it to rights.

WHOEVER thinks at all, can never be always so stupid, as to chuse that dreadful Consequence every Time he chuses his Sin; and when he finds himself unable to separate that Consequence from his Sin, it will force him to the Thoughts of divorcing himself from it, and reforming his Life. But if there is no other Punishment, nor ill Consequences in a wicked Life, as the Deists give out, than the *natural* Punishment and Consequences attendant upon Sin; and they being known beforehand what they are, either in themselves, or others, they are ready to chuse *such* a tolerable future Evil for the Sake of present beloved Sins. And thus a Door is set open, as far as their pious Endeavours can contribute, to over-run the World

with all Wickedness, and stock Hell with miserable Sinners past Redemption.

3. How does it appear from their Scheme, that God has any Regard to that which is to be taken Care of in the *first* Place, his own Authority over us as a Governor, and his Right to our Obedience; or to the ascertaining his Subjects what his Laws are, which they are to observe? For, if according to their Gospel of Nature, as they love to call it, God could freely and absolutely pardon all the Sins of the World, without any Respect to the Interposition of a Mediator, or any Propitiation, or Sacrifice, or condign Punishment, to make Satisfaction to the Justice and sacred Honour of the Divine Laws, or preserve or recover Mens Reverence of the Authority of the heavenly Governor: Upon this Supposition, what awful Ideas have we left of the Divine Justice or Holiness, or Authority, to intimidate any one Offender, so much as for one Day, to abstain from any Iniquity he is inclined to, or forbear insulting his Maker daily to his Face? Seeing it is no Provocation to him, as is very plain, from his prostituting his Pardons *at that rate*.

IF nothing had been done in Consideration of the Pardon of Sin, for deterring us from it, Sin would have been as nothing to us, the Pardon and the Pardoner equally despised. Whilst the Method he has taken to forgive, was taken in order to rouze up the Reason of the Sinner, though tied and bound with the Chain of his Sins, into an Admiration as well as Conviction of the Piti-fulness of his great Mercy in readiness to release and loose him in that Way, if he will but consent to

part with his Sins and his Chains. If he punishes for Sin, it is evident, it must be after this, from an arbitrary Will and Power, which these Gentlemen exclude out of their Notion of God ; it can't be any more out of Principles of Justice, or Regard to his own Honour ; for they are all forfeited in the Eyes of his Subjects, by the deistical Scheme. And thus God must tamely resign his Authority to his Creature Man, and leave him to be a Law to himself. So prophanely ridiculous are the Consequences flowing from their Principles.

AND as God is of little Use in their Scheme, their Law of Nature is equally insignificant : Being unwritten, unconnected, and uncollected, in a full Body, with all its Particulars ; scatter'd in the *Etbicks*, or *Offices* of this Man, and in the Fragments of another, and incapable of being recommended by *competent* Authority by any one mere Man, as all Men are equal. It is like the Light within, in their own keeping, to be vary'd, dispens'd with, and interpreted to their own Occasions ; arbitrary in their own respective Determinations, and uncontrouled by any. And as they are Masters of themselves, accountable to none, who is Lord over them ? It is a great Convenience to their free Way of thinking, and living, to have an inward Religion, which they can so easily accommodate to it. And this, perhaps, is a secret Reason of no small Influence, why they are so very much against reveal'd Religion ; because that is *written*, and particularly *explicit* in the Particulars of Morality and Obedience, and therefore not so complaisant and tractable to their Purpose.

Now, if the Gospel of Christ exhibits the Law of Nature in its full Extent, and in the

trueſt Perfection of its Meaning and Obligation, and enforces it by the ſame Divine Authority that made it ; as the End and Scope it has to fulfil, by the Aſſiſtance of Divine Means, Motives, Aids, Helps, Inſtruments that were wanting, and purpoſely reveal'd to compleat the Obſervance of it in all our Behaviour ; and if it ſets forth the Juſtice, the Honour, and the Authority of God in all its becoming Influence, as they are related to our Thoughts, Words, and Actions ; if it aſſures us of the certain tremendous Punishment of unrepented Sin ; and demonſtrates the Divine Hatred of it in the higheſt Degree imaginable ; and all in the Example of Chriſt ſuffering in our Stead ; and if the Purpose of Punishment, and all the Ends of the Divine Law are better obtained, than if we had ſuffer'd ourſelves, or been abſolved from our Sins without his doing any thing for us : Then, there appearing ſo many ſurprizing Demonſtrations of the Divine Wiſdom and Counſel in this Abyſs of it ; it muſt be own'd a Religion worthy to proceed from God, and perfectly becoming him to eſtabliſh in the World : And conſequently that the Reverse of this, the Religion of the Deists amongſt us, muſt be Weakneſs and Folly, a Contradiſtion to the Attributes and Perfections of the Divine Nature, an unreaſonable Endeavour to ſubvert the Measures of the Divine OEconomy, that are ſo full of the beſt Reaſons and Perfections of the beſt Government ; as well as of the higheſt Comfort and Conſolation unto Man : And, perhaps, in the Opinion and Uſe of moſt of them, their pretended Religion, in ſerious Earneſt, is no other than an hypocritical Skreen for a reſolv'd Attachment to the World, and their own Luſts.

BUT

BUT more especially, if the Love, Mercy, and Goodness of God appear likewise with more Lustre, and to more worthy Effects in this Dispensation of each of them, through the Death of the Mediator, than in *their* presumptuous, arbitrary Distributions of the same; then, the rational Beauty, Harmony, Fitness, and Sublime of all that the Mediator did, or God required for the Redemption of Sinners, will shine with the most engaging Evidence, to the captivating the Will and Affections, and all the Powers of embracing so incomparable a Salvation; and to the kindling at the Altar of so much Love and Mercy conferr'd upon us, that religious Love of God and our Saviour in our Hearts and Souls, as shall effectually, and above all the other Principles of human Nature, constrain us to cleave stedfastly to their Service unto the End of our Lives.

BY the Principles ingrafted in our Nature, as there is no Enforcement of Reason but by Reason, so nothing can induce rational Love but what is rationally amiable; more especially that worthy Goodness and Loving-Kindness which loves us most, and is most beneficent unto us. *Nec ratio sine bonitate ratio est, nec bonitas sine ratione bonitas*, says one of the Antients; which is equivalent to *the Ways of the Lord are Mercy and Truth; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other*. God uses the same Method, but in a higher Degree, of reconciling us, at Enmity with himself, viz. *by overcoming our Evil with his Good*, as he would have us make use of towards our personal Enemies. Would we (as who would not?) rather be led than driven? What is it but the

Goodness of God *וּבְחַסְדֵּי* that leadeth us to Repentance. Power speaks Terror rather than Encouragement to the poor Sinner; mere Authority never gains the Heart. We may yield a forced Obedience, but never a willing nor a lasting one, 'till the Opinion of Goodness, and the Sense of superadded Kindness induces and ingratiate it. And it will give the Heart greater Concern and Compunction for having abused such a Person's Love, more than because we fear his Power; and we shall forgive ourselves for acting such Baseness against such a Benefactor, with more difficulty than He will forgive us.

WHAT are all the holy and great Perfections of the Deity, if we are never the better for them? His Wisdom would overreach us in every thing, and be as much dreaded as his Power and Justice, if his Benignity and Goodness did not qualify, endear, and dispense them all unto us. It is that, and that only, gives them a friendly Aspect, and attracts our cordial Love and Esteem.

LOVE, by its Nature, is a mutual Thing; and therefore on our Part must be founded upon the conscious Effects and Receipt of Love, and Hopes of its Continuance. We can never be brought to love God, 'till we first believe that He first loved, and still loves us; and the more exceedingly we believe of that, the more ardent and predominant will be the Returns of our Love, and the Attachment of our Gratitude. And when that Master-Bias of our Constitution has got the Ascendant, and centers, according to its native Instinct, upon its true Object, its best Friend, and supreme Good, every Thing falls under its Command, and into due Subordination:

tion: And that Duty which was begun in Fear, the Fear of a Servant towards his Master, ripens into the Love of a Son towards a Father, rises into perfect Freedom and Pleasure, and grows up in us a Principle of Religion, uniform, and lasting. *Herein is the Love of God perfected*; that leading Principle, and great Fundamental of Religion, takes the right Hand of Fear, and keeps it, as long as we continue in Obedience. And being constrain'd by such superabounding Goodness of God, and Love of Christ, we should love him as our Eyes love Light, our Bodies Health, and our Souls Happiness, *i. e. with all the Heart, with all the Soul, with all the Mind.*

AND if the Contemplation of the Beauty and Benefits of God's Mercies, has, in the Nature of Things, a controuling Power to call forth and educate that fruitful Principle of Duty, Love, and Gratitude: Of all his manifold Goodness and Favours, none is to compare to that of our *Redemption*; for that improves them all severally, and perpetuates them everlastingly unto us.

THAT *Christ Jesus* came into the World to save Sinners, is worthy of all Acceptation; an Argument adjusted to the Capacity of all Understandings; as well of those that do, as those who do not comprehend the manifold Wisdom of that Economy. That he died for us whilst we were yet Enemies; not our Merits, but our Misery, not our Deserts, but our Distress, prevailing upon him, is Love more than Human, and carries with it such a conquering attractive, as to soften and melt the most obdurate Heart into an Impression of Gratitude.—To lay down his Life for
Enemies!

Enemies! Natural Religion can produce no Instance of Goodness, Benevolence, and Beneficence like this; no Ear ever heard, no Eye ever saw, nor had it, nor would it ever have enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive such Love as this, if it had not actually presented itself to the Eyes, and Ears, and Hearts of Men. Natural Religion has no Goodness, no Mercy, no Condescension of God to Man to compare to this. Why then do the Deists diminish the Glory of God's Prudence, and his Goodness; and envy Men these inestimable Effects of it; and cruelly endeavour to deprive the World of the most generous Motive, most endear'd Reason, and most pathetick Argument for loving God? For this infinite Argument for loving God, gives an infinite Preference to Christianity above Deism.

It is every way superior to the primæval Favour of first bringing us into Being. To give the Sentiments and Relish of Life, and of the Author of Life, to a Being, that before was destitute of them, is indeed a Monument of Power and Wisdom. But when, by Folly, the Enjoyments of that Being were impair'd as to this Life, and worse than lost as to the next Stage of its Existence; to restore to that forfeited Capacity of Happiness, is greater Kindness and Goodwill, than to bestow what we were not conscious, nor expectant of before. And if Well-being or Happiness is greater to anxious, miserable Being, than Being is to not being, (as it is better *not to be born*, than to be ever miserable) the Mercy and Goodness that effects that, is the most endearing and obliging that can be receiv'd, or conceiv'd. It is a Kind of *new* Creation of us, and we are accordingly affirmed to be *created again*

again in Christ Jesus to good Works, those good Works, wherein the Happiness of our Being depends for its Qualification.

AND if it became the Goodness of God to do that merciful Kindness to Men, which was so necessary and consequential to his first Favour to their Nature ; it most certainly becomes his Goodness to *reveal* that his Mercy to as many as He would have expressly sensible of the Obligation. And this makes a Revelation, having all the requisite Proofs (as all the *genuine* Works of God carry their own Proofs along with them) for convincing the Reason, that it comes from God, in Opposition to all the Counterfeits of Men ; as sure and certain, as is the Existence of God. And his Goodness being as certain as his Existence ; they have that moreover to depend upon for the Truth of the Revelation, that He would not impose upon their Reason. It being as great a Contradiction to Reason, and the Nature of God, That he should not be able to reveal and communicate his Help to his own Creatures in their greatest Distress ; That he should be a Lyar when he evidently has done so, or can deceive, or be deceived, as that he does not exist.

THE blessed Intention of which Revelation is to guide us to the Perfection of our Nature, and to the Fruition of all Blessedness, by Arguments drawn, and such a Draught, were all Men of a considering, ingenuous Disposition, would be sufficient to persuade, from Considerations of the superlative Grace, and prodigious Love of God and Christ, in the Work of our Redemption ; *The exceeding Riches of his Grace made known in his Kindness towards us through Jesus Christ.*

*Christ*¹. Such Goodness of God was intended to lead us to Repentance². St. Peter referring to this Place, account (says he) that the Long-suffering of our Lord is Salvation, even as our beloved Brother Paul also according to the Wisdom given unto him hath written unto you³. What one calls Repentance, the other styles Salvation; because the former is the indispensable Way to the latter: And the greatest Argument in the World to begin and finish it, is that thankful Reasoning upon God's most tender and affectionate Goodness in offering Salvation, and his Long-suffering waiting for our Acceptance of it, the only Friend that stands between Sin and its Wages, the Sinner and Destruction.

THE engaging Power, the mighty Sweetness, and obliging Strength of that gracious Argument, is, in a manner, irresistible upon all who will bestow the least Attention upon it; and it is the most inhuman Disingenuity to abuse an Argument drawn from such Goodness, or resist the kind Convictions of it: Because the whole Project of such rich Goodness and immense Mercy in the Method of Salvation, was only to gain the greater Authority to his Laws, to ingratiate himself into Mens Attention and Affections, that they might not so much as find it in their Hearts to break them; but, for greater Sureness of Compliance, consent to be drawn, and shewn the Way to the true End of Man, by the voluntary Cords of Man, the soft Cords of Love, and the strong Bindings of Gratitude. His Goodness and Mercy being full as great an Adversary (though of a different Sort) to Sin and Perverseness, as is his Justice; this enforces a reluctant Dread, that
instills

¹ Eph. ii. 7.² Rom. ii. 4.³ 2 Eph. iii. 15.

instills an ingenuous Fear of offending a Benefactor, so transcendently Generous, that we may be the more addicted to keep his Testimonies, and observe his Laws.

WELL knowing the Principles he embued Man with, he seems to place the Chief of his Power and Sovereignty over us in Acts of Goodness and Loving-Kindnesses; he prefers to captivate the Powers of our Obedience by that Force; and in the Strength, and in the Strivings of such Arguments, desires to triumph over us, only that we might reign with him in Glory. The Prophet requires to *fear God and his Goodness*¹; and the Psalmist draws the same natural and ingenuous Conclusion: *There is Mercy or Forgiveness with thee, that thou mightest be feared*²; and from his gracious Readiness to forgive, infers, *therefore shall every one pray unto thee in a Time when thou may'st be found*³. Whoever tramples upon the Goodness of God, tramples upon God himself; and he that slights the Present, slights the Donor.

IN giving his Son to die for us, how shall he not with him freely give us all Things? In giving the Fountain and Foundation of his Mercies, the Streams follows of Course. God and Christ have laid such infinite Obligations upon us, that we must be false to all that is grateful, just, or rational in Human Nature, as many as think of no Returns. Who can disallow the Equity, or not dread the apostolical Condemnation; *if any Man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha*⁴; he is cursed among Men, he is abandon'd from the Principles of human Nature.

AND

¹ Hof. iii. 5. ² Ps. cxxxiv. 4. : xxxii. 6. ⁴ 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

AND very justly does our Lord declare, *be that loveth Father or Mother, Son or Daughter more than him, is not worthy of him*¹; For had they all been willing to be sacrificed for the Sin of the Soul, it would have signify'd just nothing. Greater Love than this hath no Man, to lay down his Life for his Friend; but herein, above all Men, hath Christ magnify'd his Love; that, while we are yet Enemies, he dy'd for us. From being Slaves to Sin and Satan, he *ransom'd* and *adopted* us to the *Freedom*, and to the *Acceptableness* of being *Sons of God*, and *joint Heirs* with himself of the purchased Inheritance: He made himself low and poor, a Curse and a Reproach,, that he might exalt us to heavenly Treasure, and bless us with Glory. He gets us Pardon for our Sin, and in the Way he got it, wins more upon the Sinner, and gains his Heart, than to be forgiven, as often as we offended, upon mere saying we repented. All the Invitations to returning Sinners in the *new Testament* are grounded upon this Belief of *Christ* for the Remission of Sins; and in the *old Testament* upon the Hopes in *him*.

IF the Mercy of God always consults and advises with his Wisdom and Justice, to imagine (as some do) that Christ, in offering up his Sacrifice to God, address'd it only to his Mercy, by Way of Prayer and Supplication to forgive the Sins of Men, and not to the Vindication of his Honour and Justice, is to make a Distinction without a Reason. For then his Prayer and Supplication for the Pardon of the Sins of the World might have sufficed without the Sacrifice of himself. But we find that strong Cries and Tears, and

¹ *Matth. x. 37.*

and the most vehement Supplication could not avail for himself, much less for the World. Besides, the Time of praying the Father in Behalf of the Sins of Men, was to succeed after that, and be offer'd up in Virtue of the Sacrifice he *had* made. Justice for promoting Obedience by co-ercing Disobedience, is *suo jure*, as necessary to the Idea of a Governor ; as Punishment is to Laws ; and Laws to Government ; or the Idea of being govern'd by God is to Mankind. Therefore Goodness arm'd with Justice, like a Loadstone armed with Iron, vastly increases its attracting Power.

THIS is such a captivating Argument for the Love of God, as natural Religion is a Stranger to ; and consequently a Stranger to the highest Reason, the noblest, the freest, and most obedient Principle of Religion. For so much as is denied to, or diminish'd from the Goodness of God in this Dispensation, so much is denied of or taken from the Reason and Ground of loving God. For which Reason there is so little mention of the Love of God among the Heathen *Moralists*. Some of them (the *Platonists*) had a Notion of the absolute Goodness of God, as the *chief Good*, and the original Beauty and Harmony: But as to his *Relative* Goodness, and the practical Influences of that, though the Deity was continually pouring his natural Benefits upon Men, they were in a manner silent, and the Heathen World unthankful.

THEY basely robb'd Him of that endearing Obligation of Duty, and by doing so, endeavour'd to put out his Name from under Heaven ; by disregarding that Beneficence whereby he

would make himself known unto all Men, and tie all down to a natural Obedience to Him. And is not the superabounding Mercy and Goodness of God in the Redemption of the World, more attracting of Love, more influencing of Gratitude, and more persuasive of Obedience, than the *Deists* Participation of *common* Goodness over all Creatures, without Distinction of the Good from the Bad, or those who were better than the worst, among Men? Were they true to their Endeavours of adhering, in practice, to the Law of Nature, they would gladly embrace the best Means, and the most cogent Principle, for putting *Christianity* in practice; but, as they contemptuously slight this, it gives a well-grounded Jealousy, that they really, and at the Bottom, slight and disregard that Religion of Nature, which they pretend to reverence and extol.

Is it not best for the World, is it not happy for them in particular, to receive such a Religion, as removes that natural Anxiety and Enmity of Mind, which arises out of a Sense of Guilt; by a Propitiation of God's own providing, without any Cost to them? Or are they angry, because He makes the first Overture for Peace and Reconciliation, in the Method of the Christian Salvation? Or for proposing to become their endeared Father, and have no Enmity against them, but on account of their Sins; which Sins, as to their after Consequence, He would willingly also transfer upon his Son, if they would be willing to submit to *Him*; and be led with Alacrity by that Goodness to Repentance; and recover themselves from Bondage; and be invested with all the Treasures of Happiness their Nature is capable of?

If they undertake Repentance, in earnest, as they pretend to say they do, they must undertake the Belief of that which gives assured Efficacy to it, *i. e.* Remission of Sins; otherwise they are guilty of the reproaching Absurdity of omitting that, without which the other Undertaking would signify nothing. But it is impossible for their own Reasoning upon the Goodness of God, to make them as certain of that, as if He had expressly made a Proclamation of such an Act of Grace, especially when there is a well proved Revelation on foot, which actually declares it upon the high Privilege of a Covenant, and upon easy Conditions, that are the Freedom and Perfection of their Nature. The Freedom of the Sons of God is perfect Freedom; and that is brought to all the Faculties of the Children of Men, when their Understanding obeys the Faith, and becomes Disciple to the Doctrine of Christ, their Will obeys in chusing his Way to Life; and their Affections are ready to love him.

If an unknown Friend should leave them a vast Estate, at his Death, upon Condition of changing their Name, and preserving a solemn Remembrance of him, and undertaking to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World; would they reject the Offer, or think themselves unworthy of it, purely because the Conditions are so easy and so entirely reasonable? Or, should any of them be enslaved by wild Barbarians, and a Person generously offers to ransom them, would they refuse, merely because they did not send for him? Or, if by rebellious Practices they had fallen under the heavy Dis-

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pleasure

pleasure of their Prince, would they be disgust-
ed at Him, because he propos'd to accept of his
own Son, who offer'd Himself a Mediator with
his Father for them, to procure their Peace, and
introduce them again to his Presence, and to
wonted Favour?

THEY say, they are altogether for a Reli-
gion, where every thing is govern'd, order'd,
and regulated *for the best*, wherein God does not
act according to mere *Will* or *Fancy*, but con-
fines himself to the best. Or, according to the
polite Words of a *noble* Author, 'To believe
' that every thing is govern'd, order'd, or re-
' gulated *for the best*, by a designing Principle,
' or Mind, necessarily good and permanent, is
' to be a perfect *Theist*.' 'Upon the whole
' (describing *Theism*, p. 71.) he has a firm Belief of
' a God, whom he does not merely call good,
' but of whom in reality he believes *nothing be-*
' *sides* real Good.' 'To believe the governing
' Mind, or Minds nor absolutely or necessarily
' Good, nor confined to what is best, but ca-
' pable of acting according to mere *Will* or *Fan-*
' *cy*, is to be a *Dæmonist*.' He afterwards de-
scribes ' *Theism* as it stands in Opposition to *Dæ-*
' *monism*, and denotes *Goodness* in the superior
' Deity.' Which plainly insinuates, that Chri-
stianity, as it differs from *Theism*, does not de-
note Goodness in the Deity, and therefore is *Dæ-*
monism, and to be a Christian the same thing as
a *Dæmonist*; the *Author of Christianity as old*, &c.
quotes this³ Passage with Triumph.

IN

¹ *Characteristicks*, Vol. II. pag. 11.

² *Id.* pag. 13. Notes.

³ *Id.* pag. 157.

IN Answer to which ; does it not evidently appear that God has actually govern'd, order'd, and regulated every thing *for the best*, and designedly *confined* Himself to what is so, and acted nothing from mere *Will* or *Fancy*, in our Redemption by *Christ Jesus*? Has He not conducted every Step of that Affair from the first to the last, in every Particular, in all the Incidents, in every Circumstance, by the profoundest Wisdom; by an exact Adjustment to, by the truest Consultation of both the Nature of God, and the Nature of Man; in accepting the Surety of the Mediator; in appointing Him to come into the World; in the admirable Union of his Divine and Human Nature; and in the faithful Execution of all his beneficial Offices? Here is as much Beauty and Harmony to be found in the Restoration and Government of the moral World, if the *noble* Author had bestow'd a little Consideration on it, as he found in the Conduct of the natural World, to make him turn a sober Believer, which is better than an *Enthusiast* in the Contemplation.* The Consideration would have kindled his Love, and he would have been honour'd with the Love and Effects of that Wisdom and Goodness that was concern'd therein. *Cicero* acknowledg'd such a Force in the very Words *ecce homo* that he knew not well how to render it.

AND not only of Divine Wisdom, but is there not moreover an undeniable Profusion upon Men, of Divine Condescension, Love, Mercy, Goodness, in the greatest Variety of endearing Kindnesses, and obliging Benefits? Is it

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from

* *Vid. His Rhapsody.*

from the mere *Will* and *Fancy* of God, or is it not the glorious Effect and Consequence of His *rational, permanent* Goodness, that He has consulted the Good, and acted *for the best* in such numerous Benefits and Privileges that accompany so great a Salvation? If God in his Mercy will give his Son unto Death, to save the World, will they be the Persons who throw back his Gift (a greater than which He could not bestow) in his Face? By doing which they must necessarily perish, and keep no Measures with Him, though all his Measures for their Salvation are altogether for their Good? If the Beneficence of God is a Reason to love him, and be thankful, what other Instance can be equal to *this* surprizing Effect of it?

WHEN they may partake of the saving Advantage, what is that to them, what Reason of Refusal ought it to be to them, that a *third* Person suffer'd so very much for their Safety? Is it that they are, in their own Opinion, below, or above accepting such a Favour from God? If *below*; how came they, all of a sudden, to shrink themselves into such a despicable State, merely out of Crossness; when it is well known, there are no Persons upon Earth, who have an higher Conceit of themselves, than themselves? If *above*; then they make the Dictates of their own Understanding and Reason superior to their Maker's, who gave them their Understanding; they enter their Protest against the Counsels and Determinations of Heaven; throw off their Dependance, and declare their no occasion for such Favours and Bounties. So that either way, it is they themselves, out of their mere *Will* and *Fancy*, who stint and strangle the divinest Influence

ence of the Goodness of God, and cruelly to themselves, and maliciously to the World, stop up the richest, the most salutiferous Channel of it, that flows upon the Children of Men. At the same time, they pretend to magnify and praise it above all things, and set up to be *Theists* by denoting the *Goodness* of the Deity, and making Notes and Comments upon it. And their evil Communications and false Notions of the Goodness of God beget bad Mannners, in calling those *Demonists*, and that *Demonism*, which has the Charity to forgive them.

WHAT seems to mislead them most, as well as others, who deny the Divine Nature, and its Union with the Human, in our Mediator, is the Opinion that it is mean and degrading for the Son of God to become Man. The like Sentiment was the Occasion of the Heathens substituting false Mediators, and crediting *Dæmons* with that Office, whom they fancied to be of a middle State and Circumstance, inferior to the Gods, and superior to Man, but partaking of neither of their Natures. But it is a Sign these Persons have little studied God, his Goodness, his Power, or his Greatness, else they would never entertain such a stingy, incredulous Opinion of *Meanness* in such a Condescension in the Son of God. If they account it honourable and glorious in one like themselves, to stoop to relieve the Misery of a Fellow-Creature, and put themselves to some Inconvenience in doing it, or to postpone their own Advantage and Convenience to the Good of the Publick, and call the Action Heroick, Godlike; why not allow God, infinitely more inclin'd to such Acts, to send his Son, and his Son to condescend to take our Nature upon Him

to save a World of perishing Sinners? When the Father, who best understands what is true Greatness and Glory, places both of them in being *Good*; and as a Proof of that in condescending Acts of *doing Good*; and the Son places his Glory, in that Opportunity of going about upon our Earth, *doing Good*, and ministring, rather than being ministred unto.

So very credible is the Goodness of God in the Redemption of Man, that it is but pursuing the same Goodwill that first created him, and shewing *Mercy* where he had shew'd Goodness before. And, indeed, the due belief of the Divine Goodness together with the internal Evidence of the Doctrines, and Commandments, all breathing the same Divine Goodness unto Man, without any *mere Will, Arbitrariness*, or commanding for *commanding Sake*, is in a manner a compleat Proof and Security of the Truth of the Christian Revelation. It is the contrary groundless Supposition that has had the fatal influence upon Deists, or Scepticks, to reject that Revelation; and make good that Observation of our Author, *pag. 368*. 'If once pernicious Opinions are believed to be contained in any Revelation, they will have the same Effect, as if they really were there.'

How unkind both to God and Man, are these other Passages? 'If there is a Religion which teaches Adoration and Love of a God, whose Character it is to be captious, and of high Resentment, subject to Wrath and Anger, furious, revengeful, and revenging himself when offended, upon others than those who gave Offence, — must of Necessity raise even Approbation

‘ bation and Respect towards the Vices of this
 ‘ Kind ¹.’ If by insensible Degrees, as he pro-
 ‘ ceeds in his religious Faith, and devout Exer-
 ‘ cise, he comes to be more and more reconciled
 ‘ to Malignity, Arbitrariness, Partiality, or
 ‘ Revengefulness of his beloved Deity, his Re-
 ‘ conciliation with these Qualities themselves will
 ‘ soon grow in Proportion; and the most cruel,
 ‘ unjust, and barbarous Acts shall by the Power of
 ‘ this Example, be often consider’d by him, not
 ‘ only as just and lawful, but as Divine and wor-
 ‘ thy of Imitation ².

THE noble Author’s Compliment of *Wrath*,
Anger, *Revenge*, or revenging himself upon others
 than those who gave the Offence, can mean none
 but the God of the *Christians*: But that has been
 fully answer’d before: And as he puts the Truth
 of the premised Accusation upon the Truth of
 the Consequence among Christians, which he says
 must of Necessity follow as to *Approbation* and *Re-
 spect* towards those Vices; so far, as often to be
 consider’d, by the Power of such Example, not only
 as just and lawful, but as Divine, and worthy of
 Imitation. Now, if this Consequence is utterly
 false, in fact, it shews that his Premises are no
 better; and his calumnious Insult of the God of
 the Christians, and his Worshippers, is very inju-
 rious, and unbecoming a Gentleman, who seems
 to distinguish his Spirit and Style chiefly by the
 grand, I won’t call it *noble*, Artifice of uttering
 many bitter, false Things under genteel Periods,
 and polite Diction; as if the harmonious placing
 and Order, and the taking, pretty Figures of
 misrepresenting Words, was the same Thing, or
 better, than the Beauty and Order of right Ideas,
 and

¹ *Charesterist*, Vol. II. pag. 48. ² *Vid.* pag. 49.

and through the Help of them the Investigation of the Truth of Things of the greatest Concernment.

FOR who ever yet heard of any offended Christians revenging themselves upon others than those who gave the Offence, in *Imitation* of the God, *they* worship? It is too true, that Wrath, Revenge, Fury, and even Barbarity is too much found among some degenerate Christians: But neither among that worst Faction of Christians, is that cruel persecuting Spirit inspir'd, in fact, by a genuine Imitation of, or Conscience towards God; but rather from their enslav'd Conscience towards their tyrannical Rulers, who, in the Place of God lord it over their Conscience; and having taken away the Book of his Will from them, in all their *peculiar* Doctrines, conspiring to aggrandize their *peculiar* Dominion, have the undisturb'd Opportunity of telling their ignorant Vassals what is *their own* Will, instead of his, for suppressing all Opposers, *i. e.* *Heretical Pravity*; and under the false Colour of God's Sake, inflaming them to the proper Rage of executing *their* Purpose, and doing any manner of Evil *for their Sake*, always couch'd under the *Good of the Church*, which in that depraved Communion, are synonymous Words. This is such notorious Matter of Fact, that it would be an Affront to a *Protestant* Reader to offer to prove it. This very Author, and his Disciple, the Author of *Christianity as old, and the Rights of the Church, &c.* confirm the same abundantly, and descant upon it in Pages without Number. So that I can't imagine, what Sort of Christians the noble Person meant, who are in Danger of degenerating into those antichristian Vices, merely by worshipping and imitating

tating their God. Perhaps he thought of the rigid predestinarian Principle ; but exceeding few, at this Time, adhere to that ; and that only produces a sowre Face, and uncharitable Speeches ; but no Blows.

So overflowing moreover has been the Stream of Divine Goodness in the Redemption of the World ; that there is more Good redounds to Man, by this Method of rich Grace ; and to the Deity more Glory, and Illustration of the Divine Perfections, than if Man had never fallen. When Man had sought out many Devices in his State of Probation, and lost all his Prospects in the Favour of his Maker ; what Revenge, what Forfeiture does the God of all Goodness take of it ; but to provide him a Mediator, and by his Means, to raise him only the higher from his Fall ? From a Servant, his State under the first Covenant, to be under the Second, a *Friend* of God, nay, his adopted *Son* ; which gives Man, who has no Hand in his own Birth, the most endearing Sense of Choice, and the most obliging Sentiment of *Father*, beyond the common Notion of *Maker*, wherewith the *Deists* content themselves.

• THOUGH the moral Law is not abrogated, the Rigor of Obedience is so temper'd and moderated by the second Covenant, that Repentance and Sincerity are accepted, instead of perfect Obedience, and are accounted of God, through Christ, as that Righteousness which is equivalent to Innocence ; by which Allowance the Law is as well adjusted now to our (imperfect) Compliance in the best of our present Ability, as it was at first to Man's perfect Obedience, when he was in the Perfection of his original Powers. Had perfect

fect Obedience been required in the Second, as in the first Covenant, the Perfection of all our Faculties must have been restored ; and then every Sin in peccable Man would have brought on the Necessity of *another* Mediator ; after that, as Folly prevail'd, *another*, and so *toties quoties* : Nor is there any Yoke laid upon the Neck of our Appetites and Passions, but Reason concurs in laying the very same ; whilst the Honour and Reward of virtuous Performance is enhanced from the surrounding Difficulties without, and the treacherous Inclinations within. The Revelation of that Covenant brings with it large Improvements to our Reason, by many profitable Discoveries, totally undiscoverable without it ; and the Assurance of the Advancement and Exaltation of our Nature, in both its Constituents, incomparably beyond what it was at first.

THE Body then in its Similitude and Affections, was the same with the Body now ; but at its *Resurrection*, which is a new Acquisition by the Redemption of it from the Grave, it will be more than recover'd to its pristine State in *Paradise*, beyond the Health and Vigor of its first Condition ; without any craving Affections, and with Lustre and Glory equal to one of the celestial Luminaries : When there will be to both Body and Soul, Enjoyment of *eternal* Life in *Heaven*, in the Glories and Felicities of that Place ; whereas in *Paradise*, there was no Promise, unless imply'd, or Assurance of any more than an inferior perpetuated Life upon Earth. Man is therefore a Gainer every Way by the Fall, if it is not his own Default *i. e.* if he will not still continue the Fall of our first Parents, by the Favour of our Redeemer, and by the Providence of

of that Almighty and most merciful Father, whose sole Prerogative it is to bring Good out of Evil, and make the arising Good surpass the Evil.

AND can't the *Deist* bear the Burthen of Obligation, and Dependance upon Heaven, in being overcome with Kindnesses; is that a proper Return, *ubi multa beneficia antevenere, pro gratia odium redditur*? whilst the present inflicted Labour and Travel serves to keep the Body in breathing Health, during its Stay here below: Whilst Civil Government, which arises out of the Disorder of Passions, teaches Subjection to Laws, and restrains from many enormous Transgressions: And the Train of natural Evils, promiscuously distributed, weans the Mourner from the Love of this World, and sends him to his Prayers to that superintending Being, who will shew them Good, that shall be proper for their State for ever. And that absent Good will make them more subject to, and dependant upon God, on whom they rely for their Happiness. A Failure in which Dependence first introduced that Evil, out of which arose that wonderful (and otherwise undiscoverable) Display of the Divine Goodness and Excellencies through the Mediator, for advancing Man to higher Happiness from his Fall. That which was said upon another Occasion, may be apply'd to *Eve*: *Si non errasset, fecerat illa minus.*

If the *Deists* therefore have any true Respect for their old Friend, the *Body*, they would come into this Method, for the Sake of its glorious future Improvement. Or, if they have any Value for eternal Life in Heaven, as who in their Senses, in this Vale of Misery, will not pant after that?

Here

Here is the Door to enter in ; and it is mine, and I hope every Christian's hearty Desire, and Prayer, that they may enter in, before the late Hour comes, when it will be shut against them. For such is the Misfortune, or rather Malediction on their present groveling Principles, that they have no Regard what shall be the future State of their Body ; its *Resurrection* to them, not believing in their Redeemer, must be an Absurdity as it ever was to all Heathen Reasoners. And the future State of the Happiness of their Soul, as designed and intended by them, seems to be a very precarious Hope and Consequence from their Principles : And so they are false to both Parts of that Nature, which they carry about with them and adore.

THEY don't deny the Immortality of the Soul, rather give out general Words of leaving the Providence for its Condition hereafter to God. But their Principles don't allow them to be very solicitous, how they shall fare in another World. For as they generally found their Law of Nature in the Consideration of God having made Man a rational, and a sociable Creature, a Member of a Community ; the Duties which flow from that, may all be directed and intended to terminate in this World only : Self Preservation, Government of the Passions, Temperance, Fortitude, Fidelity, Truth, Justice, Peace, Mercy in forgiving Enemies, and relieving the Necessitous, and Benevolence, in wishing well to all. And for these Obligations, they make themselves accountable to co-temporary Reason, and Society.

BUT how little do they consider themselves as made for *Religion*, or accountable to God hereafter
for

for their Actions here: That would introduce *positive* Rewards and Punishments; which can't be admitted into their Scheme, as long as they reject Revelation; whence they can only be certainly known.

‘ THOUGH human Lawgivers (says the Author of *Christianity*, &c. pag. 22.) are forced to have Recourse to Punishments, which are not connected with the Things they forbid; yet a Being of infinite Power is not thus streighten'd, but may make one the necessary Consequence of the other: And, indeed, how can it be otherwise, since Good and Evil have their Foundation in the essential Difference of Things, and their Nature is fix'd and immoveable: And consequently our Happiness depends on the intrinsic Nature of the one, and our Misery on the intrinsic Nature of the other.’ And pag. 332. ‘ ’Tis the View with which an Action is done, that makes it moral: He who pays his Debts out of a Principle of Honesty, does a moral Action; while he, who does the same for fear of the Law, can't be said to act morally: And can he, who does a Thing to avoid being punish'd, or in Hopes of being rewarded hereafter; and for the same Reason is ready to do the contrary; *Merit*, at least, equally with him, who is in Love with his Duty, and is govern'd, not by servile Motives, but by the original Obligation of the moral Fitness of Things, in Conformity to the Nature, and in Imitation of the perfect Will of God? — They who do not act thus, deserve not the Title of *true Deists*;’ where it appears they pretend to *Merit* of Heaven, by their Conduct of being Deists.

AND as they neither observe the Law of Nature, nor perform moral Virtues, with respect to another World; nor place them to God's Account, as an Obedience to his Laws requiring it, nor with an Intention to his Service, nor a Prospect of his rewarding Favour; what Regard should God and another World have to them hereafter, when they have so little to either of them here? They please themselves in doing what they do, as rational, sociable Creatures. They receive not the Law of Nature from Heaven as a Rule of Duty, or as any Prescription for bringing them thither; nor does their System put them in Mind of any such Hopes, or oblige them to any such Thoughts, as expressly pursuing a future Felicity after Death. They can't bear to be told by their own Servants, that there is no need of their Interposition, when those Servants are actually doing their Work wrong, or by Halves: Yet they expect that Heaven will not only bear with the Mockery of their Remonstrance, and the Ridicule of their Refusal of its kind Interposel, for conducting them thither, and informing their Actions aright; but also find them a Place there moreover, and put them into a Post to dispute against God there, as they do here.

If this is the Secret of modern Deism; these the best Prospects drawn from the *natural* Goodness of God; it would be happy for every Body to keep out of it, and despise these low Offers made to human Nature, as many as have the Light of the Gospel, and the *Glory* of the Divine Goodness, and all the Divine Attributes, shining in

in the *Face*, or Person of *Jesus Christ*¹, and may behold the *Glory of the Lord with open Face*². How happy is it for Christians that, by his Mediation, the Glory of God, and their own eternal Good are so inseparably connected together, that while they pursue the Qualifications for their future Felicity, according to his Directions, they at the same, and by the very same Observances, act for the Glory of God?

FOR as he designed them that Happiness thro' the Mediator, the answering up to that Design, and not disappointing him of their best Endeavours, and doing what they do in the Name of the Mediator, glorifies him who laid that Design, and appointed that Mediator for assisting them to carry it on. And thus carrying in their Actions a Reference to the future World, which centers in their own Enjoyment, centers also in the Glory of God. Where their future Praises will be as liberal and everlasting, as their Happiness received. Nay, whilst they have Respect to the Recompence of Reward for animating them in arduous Virtue, they glorify him who set the Reward for that Purpose. And all who fall short of intending their future Felicity by their present Behaviour, fall short of the Glory of God.

FOR it is made an express Instance of *pleasing God*, to come to him, and diligently seek him in Virtue of that Faith, that he is a *Rewarder* of those that do so; that he receives no Advantage, no Glory by it; but merely as we receive *all* the Advantage, and *all* our Happiness from it, and without *such* a Faith, it is affirmed to be impossible to *please* God; and consequently, there is no

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B b

Probability

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 6. ² iii. 18.

Probability of pleasing him by any other Sort of Notions of bringing Glory to him exclusive of the Aim of our own Happiness; which to pursue in the Qualifications he has prescribed is the greatest Pleasure, and greatest Glory of our Father which is in Heaven. All Duty is summ'd up in the Love of God, and our Neighbour; but that is so laid in our Interest and our Happiness, that we may look upon it as an Effect depending on the other as its Cause. For, as our Happiness and well-being wholly depend upon the Help and Assistance of God, and Man; the Love of each must be the truest Way of securing the Help and Assistance of both; as the Hatred or Neglect of either must terminate in our Loss or Destruction from one, or both. To love God and Man is the same Thing as to love our own *Good* in the truest Import; that, and the Effects of that being the Virtue, Disposition, or *Qualification* for our Happiness, and the more Men abound in those Virtues and Qualifications, the more they glorify their Father in Heaven. *Gloria est consentiens laus bonorum, incorrupta vox bene judicantium de excellenti virtute.* Cic. L. II. de Invent. And whoever promotes that in others, which undoubtedly advances their present, and their future Happiness, promotes the Glory of God both in himself, and in others. But he that disregards the Pursuit of his own Salvation, in the Use of those Means, and all Persuasion to give Attention to them from those, who beseech them in Christ's Stead to be reconciled to God and their own Happiness, reject the Mediator, dishonour God, and have no Respect to his Glory, or his Counsel towards them. So true is the Connection; *he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that*

*that sent me*¹: And the Despiser is guilty of *despising, not Man, but God*²; and not God's Authority only, but the *Riches of his Goodness* also³.



C H A P. XII.

The INTERCESSION of our Mediator in Heaven: Where he reigns a KING, till he comes again to JUDGE the World.

THE Redemption of the World being finish'd by the Death of the Mediator; *he was raised from the Dead*, to demonstrate apparently to the World God's *Acceptance* of the Oblation of himself for the Sins of it. A Demonstration of the shortest Reasoning, and clearest Evidence that Matter of Fact is capable of: Recorded, not only in the most authentick History that can be given of it, to future Generations; but, as a Matter of the highest and most constant Importance; by a *weekly* Commemoration moreover, as well as *annual*: The religious Observance of the last Day of the Week being purposely alter'd to the *first*; and the Name of the *Lord's Day* given to it, in everlasting Token of such a Salvation, even to those who can't read. The *first* Day of the Week commemorates the

B b 2

first

¹ Luk. x. 16. ² 1 Thes. iv. 8. ³ Rom. ii. 4.

first Day's Creation, *let there be Light, and there was Light.* So likewise let there be a Recovery of Man by *Jesus Christ*, and it was so, in due time, by his *Resurrection from the dead.*

HE *ascended*, not secretly, but openly, in Circumstances of great Glory, to the Right Hand of God. He came forth from the Father, and came into the World a Plenipotentiary from Him; He again left the World, and return'd to the Father a Plenipotentiary from Man, to mediate with God in his behalf, and there continue a Priesthood *for ever* after the Order of *Melchisedeck*. And as He left a perpetual Memorial of his Death, upon Earth, in the Lord's Supper; so He makes a perpetual Memorial of it in Heaven, by presenting his Blood. And there He remains a perpetual, and most-puissant Security to Man, of all the Benefits of his Passion, to guarantee the Remission of Sins; the Resurrection of the Body; the promis'd Inheritance, Everlasting Life; and the Promise of the Father, the Fellowship of the *Holy Ghost*, to all that shall obey Him. For, as the Apostle argues, *if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life*¹, a Life, that lives for ever, to make Intercession for us. He had said before², *We have Peace with God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have Access by Faith to this Grace; [of Peace] wherein we stand.*

HIS Human Nature was the proper Subject of his Exaltation; in his Humiliation it was cloath'd with Mortality, and the Form of a
Servant

¹ *Rom.* v. 10.

² v. 1, 2.

Servant as an outward Vesture: At his Exaltation, He put off that Vesture, and cloath'd the Human Nature with his Immortality, and cover'd and adorn'd its Immortality with Robes of Glory and Majesty. Before I treat of the Ends and Benefits of his *Ascension*, it may be proper to consider some Circumstances of it.

HE is represented to have ascended above all Heavens, higher than the Heavens; to be taken into Glory, into the most excellent Glory, and to the Right Hand of God, and there to sit: Undoubtedly signifying, that He is exalted to that very inaccessible Light where God dwelleth, that all blessed and all glorious Place, where there are many blissful Mansions. The highest Residence and chiefest Station whereof is justly given to Him, *whom in all Things it becometh to have the Prebeminence*¹; for his mighty suffering upon Earth for Man's Salvation: *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing*². This Dignification of him above every Name, and Inauguration into a Kingdom and Governance over all, is familiarly represented to our earthy Conceptions by *sitting at the Right Hand of God*.

FOR as the Right Hand of this World's Monarchs is the chiefest Place of Honour and Distinction; after the like manner is the glorified Jesus at God's Right Hand, at the Right Hand of his Power, and of his Throne, and in many Places said to *fit* there; which seems to imply the firm Possession and durable Continuance of that glorious State; or the Honourable Posture

B b 3

of

¹ Col. i. 12.² Rev. v. 12.

of a Judge which is that of *sitting*: For he is constituted our Ruler and Judge, and there he sits in the Throne of his Majesty. One Place there is¹ where St. Stephen is said to have *seen the Glory of God, and Jesus standing at his Right Hand*; which Change of Posture seems to denote the ready Assistance of his distressed Servants; as if he had risen off his Seat, to plead for them with his Father.

THE first blessed End of his ascending into Heaven was, that He might send the *Holy Ghost* the Comforter. So he open'd the Matter to his Disciples, and blam'd their arising Sorrow at the News of his Departure, with an Assurance *That it is expedient for you that I go away* in order to send Him; and if *I go not away the Comforter will not come*². And elsewhere³ *the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified*; i. e. the Holy Spirit was not yet imparted, and become the explicit Right of Men, in vertue of the Divine Promise and Engagement enacted in the Gospel Covenant, till all Things belonging to the Mediator of that Covenant were fully completed. 'Tis true; the Communications of the Spirit of Grace and Comfort were gratuitously imparted to several before, and under the Dispensation of *Moses*; and seems to have been given to some out of that Law. But it did not properly belong to that Œconomy; there was no Claim of Right, nor any Expectation of fulfilling the Promise, but in vertue of the future ensuing Dispensation of the Messiah, *Jesus Christ*, who brought Grace and Truth. Then the Spirit of God explicitly became the great and glorious Condition of the New Covenant. And God

¹ Acts vii. 56.² John xvi. 7.³ vii. 39.

God bound himself in the Justice of Promise, and the Obligation of Covenant, to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, in the Mediator's Name. The Prayers and Supplications of such Votaries will ever have a Right to the special Influences and Comforts of that Holy Spirit, and to the Increase thereof, according to their actual Improvements under what is given. But the first extraordinary Effusion of that celestial Spring of Gifts unto Men, was to be the Effect, and Consequence of our Mediator's Prayers and Intercession to the Father for it: *I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter* ¹.

AND that first Instance of his prevailing Intercession (a surprizing Token of its Efficacy) commenc'd, when he was received up into Glory, and enter'd within the Vail; and had presented the Blood of Attonement, for making up the Breaches, and cementing the Friendship between God and Man. In return of which, as a demonstrative Attestation of a perfect Reconciliation, and Peace effected, and concluded, Kings upon their solemn taking Possession of their Dignity being wont to bestow Gifts and Largeesses; the most extraordinary of the *Holy Ghost* were pour'd out upon the then Disciples; and the Love of God shed abroad upon the Hearts of all Believers, by the same Spirit, which is given unto us; whose blessed Comforts were design'd a lasting Joy, that *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, which, together with Peace and Righteousness, is constitutive of the Kingdom of God ², to continue our Peace with God; and to be with us moreover in the Nature of a Seal and Earnest of our future

B b 4

Inheritance,

¹ *John* xiv. 16.² *Rom.* xiv. 17.

Inheritance, until the time the purchased Possession comes. *When he ascended up on High, He accordingly led Captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto Men*¹.

AFTER the Mediator had left the World, and was gone to the Father, the Mission of the Holy Ghost was the most honourable Testimonial that could be sent down from Heaven, or received upon Earth, of the Mediator's certain Arrival there, after his Departure from Earth. And, as that most excellent Gift comprehensively includes all Gifts and Blessings; it is fit, that He, who was the procuring Cause, should send it, as well as the Father. Thus He had declar'd, *He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you*². And when He, the Holy Ghost, is come, *He shall reprove the World of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment*³. Of the Sin of not believing on him, the Sin of dishonouring, and the Sin of disobeying him. Of *Righteousness*; because He went to the Father; an incontestable Vindication that He could be no Impostor; but was truly righteous, and undoubtedly innocent, in all Conversation; was it otherwise, the righteous Father would not have receiv'd Him, much less given such Proofs to the World, of his being well-pleased with Him. Of *Judgment*; because He is appointed the Judge of the Prince of this World, and of all the Men and Spirits, who submit to his Mis-rule. Of all which Things the World was reprov'd, and convinc'd of the Reproof by the Miracles, by the Preaching, and by the Writings of the Apostles, wrought, inspired, dictated by the Holy Ghost.

AND

¹ *Eph. iv. 8.*

² *John xvi. 14.*

³ *v. 8. &c.*

AND what more marvellous Display could there be to the then World, of the Heavenly Power of the *departed* Mediator, being so powerfully Resiant still in *Spirit* with his Disciples, as to enable them, according to Promise, to do greater Wonders and Miracles than He himself perform'd, whilst present in Body? He, the *Pareclete*, was to advocate and promote the Cause of Christ with Men, as his Vicegerent on Earth; whilst Christ himself was gone to advocate the Cause of us Men with the Father; and to act under Him in all the Affairs of his Kingdom, and the Furtherance of Men's Salvation, till He brings all his faithful Followers to the Glory He is gone before to prepare for them. By this Spirit, when two or three are met together, there is He in the midst of them. By the same Spirit is maintain'd that vital Union, and Communion, that is so necessary between the Head and the Members, the Vine and the Branches. By which vital Powers, and spiritual Comforts, all the desirable Ends of his Presence upon Earth are better answered, and to more Advantage, and better Effect to his Followers, than in a visible Manifestation of his Person. For that was more necessary to *appear for us* before God: And when the *Judge himself* appears for the Criminal, in how fair a Way is the Criminal to be acquitted? With respect to which Presence, He is affirm'd *to have enter'd into Heaven, now to appear in the Presence of God for us* ¹.

THERE was another End of his Ascension; that, having, by his Resurrection, conquer'd him *who had the Power of Death, the Devil,*
he

¹ Heb. ix. 25.

he might triumph, like a Conqueror, over him, and all the Principalities and Powers of Darkness; and make a shew of them openly in leading Captivity captive: And might receive, in just Recompence to his grievous Indurances, the Reward of his Passion, and the Travel of his Soul. It was meet and fit, that the mighty Condescension in emptying himself of Glory and Majesty for our Redemption, and undergoing such bitter cruel Things, for no Fault of his own, should be signally and notoriously recompens'd with exceeding Glory. To which End the *Psalmist*¹ foretold, *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up ye, everlasting Doors, that the King of Glory may come in*, and be inaugurated into his everlasting Kingdom, and be glorified with that Glory, which he had with the Father before the World was. That the Ignominy of his Cross might be done away; and that he, the Heir, who had not a Place to lay his Head, whilst on Earth, might have the Disposal of all Places in Heaven and Earth. This again convinces the World of Righteousness, *i. e.* the Righteousness of the Father in rewarding the Humiliation of the Son with such a glorious Exaltation; which made it appear, that he forgot not, in due time, to vindicate his Son's personal Innocence, so much oppress'd with the Contradiction and Contumely of Sinners, and to crown his Calamity with the greater Glory. *Ought not Christ*, said he to his Disciples, *to suffer these Things*, according to many Prophecies, and so enter into his Glory?²

AND great Reason have we to double our Rejoycing in the Lord; for these Triumphs of human

¹ *Psal.* xxiv. 8. &c.

² *Luke* xxiv. 25.

man Nature over its grand Adversary, who had subjected it to Death, in its Life and Exaltation far above all the dignified Angelick Host, to the Right Hand of God. And that we have actually there, by means thereof, the most prevailing *Advocate*, the most tender and affectionate *Intercessor*, and most merciful KING and JUDGE. Who, by partaking equally of the Divine, and Human Nature, is, in the Nature of Things, the most exact, unexceptionable Mediator between, that can be devised by, God or Man: Being equally interested in, and related and affected to both, the Ballance of Favour, Justice, and Duty, is held in the most equal Hand. And therefore is He the truest MEDIUM, and the properest CENTER of Communication; to derive from God unto Man, all Mercies, Gifts, Blessings, spiritual and temporal, all Promises and Performances of Covenant; and to convey, and recommend from Man to God, all Addresses of Prayer and Thanksgiving, all engaged Duty and Service of Repentance and Amendment, all Sorrows and Sufferings for the Sake of a good Conscience, and to offer up all the Sacrifices to Heaven that Men are now allow'd to offer upon Earth.

ALL these Intercourses are kept up, and carried on in the powerful *Name of Christ*, so dear to God, and for that reason should be as dear to, and respected by Man. Therefore are we required, *Whatsoever we do in Word or Deed, to do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving Thanks to God the Father by Him*. Verily, verily, I say unto you, *whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name, ask and ye*

ye shall receive, that your Joy may be full¹. TO DO ALL in the Name of the Lord, is, 1. 'To have respect in all Things to his Will, as knowing we are obliged to live to him, to the Honour of his Name and Doctrine². 2. To be desirous that our Actions may be well pleasing to Him³. 3. To expect Acceptance of our Actions, Prayers, and Praises through Him⁴. 4. A Recompence of them from Him hereafter⁵. In the Name, has several Acceptations in Scripture, 1. In the Authority of, or Commission from⁶. I am come in my Father's Name⁷. I command thee in the Name of the Lord Jesus to come out of⁸. So⁹ agreeably to this Charge in the King's Name. 2. For the Sake; He that receiveth a Prophet in the Name of¹⁰. 3. Instead of; Comforter come, whom God will send in my Name¹¹. 4. Power; I have kept them in thy Name¹². 5. In Profession and Acknowledgment of, Belief in; Thus the Form of Baptism; not by Authority or Commission from. 6. In Aid and Assistance; thus David I come to thee in the Name of¹³.

IN these Senses chiefly we come to God, IN THE NAME of the Mediator, Christ, in Depen-

¹ John xvi. 23, 24.

² 2 Cor. vi. 14.

³ 2 Cor. v. 8, 9.

⁴ John xiv. 13, 14, 15, 16. Heb. xiii. 15.

⁵ Eph. vi. 8. Col. iii. 24.

⁶ Matth. vii. 22.

⁷ John v. 43.

⁸ Acts xvi. 18.

⁹ 1 Cor. v. 4. 2 Thess. iii. 6. James v. 10.

¹⁰ Matth. x. 41.

¹¹ John xiv. 26.

¹² Ib. xvii. 12.

¹³ 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

Dependance upon Him for *free Access* even unto¹⁵, Acceptance with God; according to those Commands of Praying, and giving Thanks¹⁶.

AND the Mediator asserts the Right of his Name, and assures his Followers of the Power, of it from his own Power of granting, and at the same time directs them what was His, and what should be their Intention in applying to his Name, or expecting a favourable Return: *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*, John xiv.

13.

THIS Intercourse and Dispensation of God in Christ, is admirably calculated to give us true Notions both of *God*, and *Ourselves*; whereon the Strefs of true Religion so very much depends. 1. Of the infinite *Holiness* and *Sanctity* of *God*. Seeing He will immediately, and of himself, maintain no Communication or Dealing with such a sinful Creature as Man, who has, by wilful Transgression, corrupted and polluted himself so egregiously in his Sight; and, without a Mediator to sanctify and cleanse him from Iniquity, would never admit him into his Presence, or, without his Intervention, have any Converse with him.

THIS moreover gives us most convincing, right Notions, that He is no arbitrary, fickle, capricious Being; in Confutation of the Deists groundless Imputations to his Methods of ruling and governing us by a Mediator. For what can possibly

¹⁵ *Eph.* ii. 16. *Heb.* x. 19, 22. 1 *Pet.* iii. 18.

¹⁶ *Acts* iv. 12. 1 *Cor.* iii. 2. *Eph.* v. 20. *Phil.* iii. 9. *Col.* iii. 17. 1 *Pet.* i. 21. ii. 5. *Rev.* viii. 3.

possibly represent him farther distant from Arbitrariness, Fickleness, or Caprice, than his actual referring, and fixing himself to a MEDIATOR, a third Person between himself and us; notwithstanding he is so infinitely superior to us in Dignity, and is the offended and disobliged Party? And in doing so, he may well expostulate, *Are not my Ways equal?* The mighty God makes the Overture, and advances not only the first Step, but the greatest Part of the Way, towards a Reconciliation with his diminutive Creature Man; all is done at infinite Expence of Mercy, and Display of Goodness and Placability of Anger on his Part, as before shewn; and therefore no Stop nor Difficulty, nor Dilatoriness remaining, for a perfect Peace and Friendship, but wholly and solely on Man's Part, who purely demurs and dallies in his Danger; and the least in Consideration is the last in accepting to be reconciled to God.

ARE not thy Ways unequal? Son of Man born of a Woman! great in nothing, so much as Stubbornness and Pride against thy Maker, arisen in thy Heart most preposterously from thy Fall and Meanness! Are they not unequal without Measure, and perverse beyond Bounds? Are not thy Ways arbitrary, guided by mere Will and Fancy? Whilst thou wickedly thoughtest me to be such a one as thyself, and takest Measure of me and my Ways, by thyself and thy Ways; and pique at me, before thy Neighbours, for what is only to be found in thyself! Thy Reasonings, therefore, and thy Ways only are arbitrary and wilful, and thy Conclusions against me, are iniquitous and wrong before me, and Man!

2. THIS Dispensation of an INTERCESSOR gives us a true Knowledge and Notion of *ourselves*; as it furnishes us with a meet Opinion, and proper Thoughts of our own very great Unworthiness, and manifold Deflections from the right Way, our own Conscience bearing Witness; which throws us at such a Distance, and renders us unapproachable, and our best Conduct disagreeable and exceptionable every Way, but thro' that only Way, the one Mediator *Jesus Christ*.

THE Heathen Sentiments of their own Meanness and Unworthiness, and of God's Greatness and Purity, which occasion'd their Application to and Dependance upon Mediators, were no Fault in them, but a right Foundation of thinking founded in Nature. But their Fault was; they built upon that right Foundation all Sorts of Wrong, incompetent, worthless Mediators; they every where worshipp'd for such, as *by Nature* were no Gods; and the Mediator their foolish Heart pitch'd upon intercepted and engrossed the Worship in some sensible Image, which they stupidly glorify'd as God; and they retained not the invisible God in their Knowledge, or in any religious Respect, at the same Time they knew him to be God incorruptible, and invisible, by his visible corruptible Works; and so were guilty of Idolatry. Our Author, *pag. 74.* contrary to the common Dictates of the Law of Nature affirming, 'That *Respect* which they shewed to the supreme Being, and the Thoughts of their *own Unworthiness*, were unworthy Notions in the Heathens.' Can anything be more the Sentiment of Reason, or the conscious Sense of our guilty Nature, than such

such an high Opinion of God, and such a low one of our own ill Deservings?

BUT the *Papists*, though they pretend to go upon the same Ground, are more inexcusable, in bringing back Idolatry into the Region of Christ, who came purposely into the World to extinguish it: Because they have the Knowledge of the true and only Mediator, and of many Commands to the contrary. Yet in Contempt of God and the Mediator, and their reveal'd Will, they have chosen to themselves Variety of superfluous Intercessors, *Saints* and *Angels*: And set up an idolatrous prohibited Worship and Dependence upon them, under a false Shew of Humility; which is not Humility, but an impious disobedient Perverseness and Corruption of Humility in not applying where they are purposely commanded, and only permitted to apply.

SINCE Christ is able of himself to save all to the uttermost who apply to his Mediation, don't they directly diminish the Efficacy, and deny the Sufficiency, and the Divine Appointment of his *only* Intercession; by their vain ridiculous Application to so many others? Can they be sure, that any Saint or Angel knows their Want, or are capable of hearing their Prayers; as all Christians are sure and certain, that our Lord both knows, and hears them every where? Will they presume to ask Favours of God in a different Way than he has directed to seek them? Is he not Master of his own Favours, and of the Method and Manner how he will confer them? Is there Mention of any Mediator of *Intercession* for us to apply to in Scripture, but one; and he is *Christ*: But they who can quit Scripture, Reason, and their Senses

so far as to maintain Transubstantiation, may maintain any other Absurdity they please; whether Truth and Falshood are not the same Thing, or rather, whether Interest is not all in all to the degenerate Priesthood, in *changing* the great Law of Mediation and Intercession. What can, I say, more reprove the petulant Sufficiency of any Man's reasoning, or Dependance on his own Conduct for Salvation, in despite of Revelation; or more convict him of the Want of Humility, and lowly Opinion of himself, the true Groundwork of the Knowledge of Salvation that comes from God, than this Method that God has taken with Man? For this convinces him, if anything can, of the Worthlessness and Unacceptableness of all that is in his poor Repentance and Amendment, when and where they are refractory to, and contemptuous of the Thoughts of our *Mediator*. Since our Repentance avails as nothing before God, unless it is favour'd, and recommended before him, by the great Inviter to it at the Right Hand of God, who gains it Acceptance. *If any Man sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*; and therefore, if any repent, knowing that Advocate, and depending on him for Remission of Sins, it is he must introduce his Repentance to the Father. And since Repentance without Amendment is Mockery before God and the Mediator, it makes that as necessary, where there is Space of Time for it, as Repentance; yet even that is as unavailing, by Reason of its great Imperfectness, from those who have the Knowledge, and free Use of *Christ*, unless the perfect Righteousness of the Author and Finisher of our Faith cures it, recommends it, and speaks in its Favour.

For alas! of ourselves when we have done all that we are able, we are but unprofitable Servants; without the least Shadow of Merit to sue for any thing at the Throne of Grace: And therefore seeing we depend upon the Son for all that we have, or hope for, as he is the appointed Dispenser over the House of God, having the Disposall of all Gifts and Graces, and every Blessing that descends from Heaven upon the Sons of Men, must come through his Hands, and are solely owing to his Mediation; we must be mindful and assiduous of doing those Things that are well pleasing to him, as we desire his Favour, or value his Intercession. And to all such he is sure to make good, and obtain from the Father all Promises, Privileges, Grants, and inheritable Joys and Rewards: For he is able to give, and able to save to the uttermost all those that come to him.

WORTHY Notions of our **MEDIATOR** are ever necessary, both to regulate our Addresses, and encourage them to the Throne of Grace.

1. The Consideration of him, what he really is; as much interested in, and concerned for the Honour and Authority of God, as for the Interest and Benefit of Man; mightily conduces to regulate the Matter of our Prayers and Applications to God. In the Presence and Devotion of such Thoughts, what Votary would presume to offer up Petitions for the Pardon of his Sins, *for the Sake of Jesus Christ his Mediator and Advocate*, whilst he continues unchang'd and impenitent in Mind and Practice, with Regard to that Sin or Sins; or refuses Forgiveness to others for their Trespases against him? He may be very sure such

a Petition can never be regarded, or prefer'd by him, who is the *impartial* Mediator of the Covenant between God and Man; when it is to contrariant, and abhorrent to the Terms of it; which promises and ensures Forgiveness to none, but the penitent Forsaker of Sin: And he is as much engag'd to be true and faithful to God, in seeing to the Performance of the Terms, as to gain us Favour and Acceptance upon our sincere Performance of them. The Foundation of God, and that Covenant, standeth sure, *be that nameth the Name of Christ*, or invokes him for MEDIATOR, *must depart from Iniquity*; or else he may depart from the Thoughts of his being concern'd as Mediator for him: And then his Case is desperate beyond Redemption. The very Prayer of such wicked ones, turns into Abomination, both to God, and the Mediator.

So in every other Petition, or Thanksgiving, as ever we expect him to introduce or second it, we must have a true and due Regard to the Honour of God, and his general Laws, as also his particular Precepts and Directions incumbent upon our Station; as well as to the recommending ourselves, and our Affairs to his Favour; and all our publick Prayers and Devotions must be qualify'd with a right Intention, directing them to the single Service of God, not to the Eyes of Men; otherwise praying or hoping his Intercession, we do but affront him, as if he did not know our Hearts: In that Case, we consider the Mediator not whole and entire as he is, but by *Halves*. For whilst we would gladly make Use of his Interest in the Father to be serviceable to ourselves, we are guilty of the Partiality, and

the base Imagination of expecting, he would betray the Respect and Obedience due to his Father's Authority over us; whose Will is one with his, and whose Commands are the same, with Respect to our Compliance; *who is now in Heaven, become the Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him.* And there he has the Denomination of Impartiality, being called faithful and true. *Rev. xix. 2.* which he fulfils both towards God, and Man. Being thus rightly guarded from any Presumption.

2. THIS Dispensation is most graciously and divinely conceded unto Men to encourage our Addressees to Heaven with every Alacrity and cheerfulness, and with full Assurance of Success, our Hearts can wish. Our Imagination can readily supply, and assist us, as it were, with an actual seeing a glorious Person, a mighty Counsellor in our Human Nature, assisting, abetting, and pleading at the Right Hand of God for human Weakness and Frailty, confessing its Willfulness and Folly, and vowing its best Resolution, and performing its sincerest Endeavours after better Obedience. *Having therefore boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living Way, which he has consecrated for us through the Veil, i. e. his Flesh; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience¹. And again, we have Freedom and Access with Confidence to the Father, by Faith in him². And St. Peter makes it the End of his suffering for our Sins, that he might bring us unto God³. And we are commanded to ask in his Name, that we should receive, and that our Joy may be full⁴. And herein is Joy, if any*

¹ Heb. x. 19. &c. ² Eph. ii. 16. ³ 1 Pet. iii. 18.

⁴ Job. xvi. 14.

Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins. And see how the Apostle ascends in his Argument; *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the Right Hand of God, who also maketh INTERCESSION for us.*

WHAT can intimidate poor Sinners now, or keep them from their Prayers; though they tremble never so much in their Guilt, what have they to fear from the Number or Burthen of their Sins, or the Corruption of their Nature, or the Imperfection of their Services, or the Fear of Death, or the Day of Judgment? Is not interceding and mediating less than suffering and dying for them; how then can they find in their Heart to disbelieve or doubt that he, who did the one, can possibly forsake them in the other? Had they none but themselves to support and appear for them, they might be justly overwhelm'd with Despair. But having the *Son of God*, who came into the World to call Sinners to Repentance, and make their Peace by what he suffer'd, ready to stand by them, and bid them be of good Chear, *their Sins shall be forgiven them*; what unspeakable Joy should flow into their Minds, and animate their Prayers, and all their Endeavours after newness of Life? The understanding that *Peace of God*, which passeth and excelleth all other Understanding, to which they are called, and in which they are bid to stand, should *rule in their Heart*¹, over all the other Joys and Satisfactions, and Understandings of it. The external Peace

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of

¹ 1 Job. ii. 1. ² Rom. viii. 33, 34. ³ Col. iii. 15.

of a Kingdom is a Cessation from War, and a good Understanding in Trade with its Neighbours; as its internal consists in Concord; the Peace of the Body is Health; the Peace of the concupiscible and irascible Affections is their Government. But the Peace of a rational accountable Creature to God, is the Remission of Sins, &c. more valuable than all the rest, and of an infinitely greater Consequence: *My Peace I give you, my Peace I leave with you*, is better than all other Thanksgiving Days; as the Want of it in a disquieted Conscience, sowres the Enjoyment of all the rest.

AND therefore, since we know that his Merits are so vast, and his Interest in Heaven so great, as to obtain whatever he asks; in Confidence of the same, we should be exhorted *to come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may find Grace to help in Time of Need*. Had we no Friend in the Court of Heaven, then indeed our prodigious Guilt might well astonish, and congeal us out of any Hopes of Acceptance with him, whom we have so much offended. But seeing we have so powerful a Friend, and so loving of us, and ready to introduce us, and our Services, and interest all his infinite Stock of Merit for Favour to the returning Penitent, we ought to lay aside every slavish Fear and cold desponding Thought; and approach the infinitely tender God and Father, with the Warmth of Freedom join'd with the Reverence of Sons, adopted by him in Christ. For with what transcending Joy does St. Paul acquaint us, *that after we had been dead in Sins, God hath quicken'd us together with Christ, and raised us together with him, and made us to sit in heavenly Places in Christ Jesus*.

i. e.

i. we are put into the happy Capacity of this, by our Repentance and Obedience; the Blood of Christ having open'd the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers; and given us an abundant Entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour.

HEREIN our Hope should be sure and stedfast as the Anchor of our Soul, which entereth into that within the Vail. Whither the Forerunner is for us enter'd, even Jesus. Heb. vi. 19, 20. And that Entrance gives full Assurance, *πληρονομία*, to our Hope, and Faith to the End, v. 11. that where he is, we may be also. Tertullian speaks in a fine triumphant Strain, *Hic sequester dei & hominum appellatus, ex utriusq; partis deposito commisso sibi carnis quoq; depositum servat in semetipso, Arrabonem summæ totius. Quemadmodum nobis Arrabonem spiritus reliquit, ita & a nobis Arrabonem carnis accepit, & venit in cælum, pignus totius summæ, illuc quandoq; redigendæ. Secura estote caro & sanguis usurpastis & cælum & regnum dei in Christo: aut si negent vos in Christo, negent & in cælo Christum, qui vobis cælum negaverunt.* Lib. de. Resur. Carnis.

THE High Priest of our Profession, who ever liveth to make Intercession for us, must offer up all the Sacrifices, on Man's Behalf, that are now allowed upon Earth. 1. With Respect to God; by him therefore let us offer up the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks unto his Name. 2. With respect to our Neighbour; the doing Good and communicating to his Needs, stiled well-pleasing Sacrifices. 3. With respect to ourselves; our Bo-

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dies

dies are to be presented a living Sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable Service

It is a fit Oblation both to God and Reason, that the Body should be govern'd by the Mind, with all its Affections and Lusts; which are therefore required to be crucify'd and subdu'd; seeing the misruling of them, was that, which first brought Sin into the World, and afterwards a Saviour to die for it. And therefore it would be the most unreasonable Thing in the World, not to be very vigilant upon that first Inlet to Sin. Its Temperance and Purity will always be a reasonable, and therefore a Christian Service. If the Soul can so far prevail as a King in that Government, or as a Priest unto God to offer the Body a living Sacrifice, holy, &c. with its Affections and Lusts, corresponding to Christ in his Mercies, offering himself a Sacrifice, all the Opposition, and all the Opportunities of the Devil are conquer'd, the Victory over the World gain'd, which is the Design of the reasonable Service of Christianity. And if our Bodies are redeemed from the Grave, as well as the other Moiety of us our Souls from Destruction; it is but a reasonable grateful Return, that we should study to glorify God in our Bodies, as well as in our Souls. All these are called *spiritual Sacrifices* by St. Peter, *acceptable unto God*.

If we consider this heavenly Advocate, as Bone of our Bone, and Flesh of our Flesh, having the Affection of a Brother, strengthen'd with an Almighty Power and immense Mercy, and that his Heart is sensibly touch'd with the Sorrows and Miseries of all those who recommend their

Supplications

Supplications to him, for Redress; *For we have not an High Priest who can't be touch'd with the feeling of our Infirmities, but was in all Things tempted as we are, yet without Sin*: What a Fund of Consolation is this, to all who suffer for a good Conscience? When they may look up to him, who is the Patron of Conscience, and was through Suffering consecrated the Author and Finisher of our Faith; and therefore can never fail to remember, or be insensible to intercede for them, out of the fresh Memory and never failing Experience of former Grievs and Sorrows. Their Case is felt, and therefore heard, and favour'd of course. And what Temptation can befall any of his Followers, the Pressure of which he did not himself sustain, as their Captain in the Combat, leading the Way to Conquest? And therefore certain either of his equivalent Assistance, or of his shaping a way to escape, that they shall not be tempted above what they are able.

THE Apostle supports his Argument, why Prayers, Supplications, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks, should be made for all Men, from the Consideration of the Man Christ Jesus being the one Mediator between God and Man²; and previously to that, he shews it to be our Duty to pray for all Men, because God would have all Men to be saved; and the Proof of that is, *For there is one God, who made all Men of one Blood, the Creator, and Saviour of all Men; and therefore as much Reason to save the Gentiles, as the Jews, being God of one, as well as the other.* Then follows, *and*

¹ Heb. iv. 15.

² 1 Tim. ii. 1 to 6.

and one Mediator [or Peace-Maker] betwixt God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus. Had Christ Jesus been denominated Mediator there, from his superior Nature, Son of God, it would only have repeated the same Thing; but calling him *Man* is a further Argument that God is not only the Maker of all Men, but his Son also took on Him the Nature that is common to all Men; which is a much more endear'd Reason of his Willingness to save *all* of that Nature; all Men partaking of the same Flesh and Blood he took upon Him, are therefore *related* to this one Mediator, and therefore intended by this one God to be saved through this one Mediator. Besides, the *Human* Nature of *Christ* (though that Word implies both his Natures) is only mentioned, because that Propitiation, which render'd him that successful Mediator, essentially depended upon his *Death*: His Divine Nature could not die; though, as High Priest, he offer'd and presented *his own Blood* of that suffering dying Nature, or himself crucified, *without Spot to God, through the eternal Spirit*, or in the Dignity and deserving of that Spirit, by which he was the Son of God.

THE Words of *Philo* as cited by Dr. *Whitby* on 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. are so remarkable, that I transcribe them. 'The Father of all Things hath granted to his most antient Word, an excellent Gift, *viz.* That standing in the Confines of both, he should put a Difference betwixt the Maker, and the Thing made, as being an Intercessor for mortal Man to the immortal God, and an Ambassador from the King to his Subjects; in which Gift he rejoiceth, saying,
And

* *Heb.* ix. 14.

And I stood betwixt God and you, being neither unbegotten as God, nor made as we are, but a middle of the Extreams, and a Pledge to both; to the Creator, engaging that all Mankind shall not corrupt itself, and apostatize, choosing Disorder before Order; to the Creature, that he may have good Hope that the merciful God will not wholly overlook his own Works; for I denounce peaceable Things to the Creature, from the God of Peace.' And speaking of their *High Priest*, who was a Type of Christ, he saith, 'The Law will have him raised above Human Nature, and coming near to the Divine; and if I may say the Truth, a middle betwixt both, that Men may atone to God by a Mediator, and God may reach forth and distribute his Favours to Men, by a certain Minister.' And again, 'It was necessary that he, who performs the Office of a Priest to the Father of the World, should have for his Advocate his Son, most perfect in Virtue, to obtain the Pardon of Sins, and the Participation of the greatest Blessings.'

I PROCEED, in a few Words, to mention the Mediator as *King* and *Judge*.

Rev. iii. 21.
The Words of Rev. iii. 21. are to be understood in this manner. The Father of all Things hath granted to his most beloved Word, an excellent Gift, viz. That standing in the Connexion of both, he should put a Difference betwixt the Maker, and the Thing made, as being an Inceptor for mortal Man to the immortal God, and an Ambassador from the King to the People, in which Gift he is represented, saying, And



C H A P. XIII.

Of the Mediator as KING.

OUR Lord at his Ascension was invested with a Kingdom and Rule over all the Creation of Spirits and Men. Angels, Principalities, and Powers, being made subject unto him, that all Knees should bow and do homage to the King of Glory, whom God delighted to honour. This is meant of his *mediatorial* Kingdom, assumed upon the Fall of Man, to last till the Restitution of all Things; which will be possess'd by him as KING, LORD, MEDIATOR, INTERCESSOR, the *Head* of all the Means for bringing Men to God, until all Things shall actually be subdued unto him, and the Kingdoms of the Earth become the Kingdom of his Son; and at the Consummation of this Scene of Man, when the last Enemy, Death, shall be put under his Feet by a general Resurrection, and every one has receiv'd from *his* Judgment, according to the Deeds done in the Body, the End of the Mediation ceasing, the Kingdom will cease with it, and be resign'd up to the Father; and then all Power and Dominion will be from thenceforth, and for ever, solely, and immediately exercised by the Deity, *That God may be all in all*, as it was before the Fall of Man.

FOR

FOR this Kingdom, being founded in the New Covenant, commenc'd in its Title and Jurisdiction, immediately after the Fall of our first Parents; though it was not perfected till after the Resurrection and Ascension of the Mediator: Till which time, *John* his Forerunner, *He himself*, and his *seventy Disciples*, preach'd Repentance in the *Soyle* of the Kingdom of Heaven being then *at Hand*. And this his mediatorial Governance was enlarged at his Ascension to Heaven, by the Addition of all Angels, Thrones, and Dominions, being subjected to him: And now all good and bad Spirits act in Subordination to him, as he appoints and directs the one, and permits the other, in the Affair of Man's Salvation.

IN vertue of this KINGLY Authority he gave Laws to *Israel*, and ruled divinely over them; and sometimes went visibly in and out before them, to lead and conduct them in their Marches and Difficulties; and was angry with them, when they required a more visible King of their Brethren, merely like themselves. And the *Jews* at last, to fill up the Measure of their manifold Disobediences to him, fulfill'd the Exposition of *Pilate* (*Will ye crucify your King?*) with their wicked Hands. And as a Heavenly King of Righteousness, over his Church and People, he has for those heavenly Ends of Righteousness, deputed the supreme Powers of civil Government, (who submit to him, and to his Scepter of Righteousness) and under them, Bishops, Pastors, and other spiritual Subordinations for the Defence, and for the Edification thereof. And all these hold of their *supreme*
Head

Head *Christ*, who is styled the Head of the Church; and are tied to his Laws in all Things relating to Souls and their Salvation, which is the Object of *Christ's* Care and Government.

AND all Professors of his Name, wherefoever dispersed over the Earth, are cemented together as Fellow-Subjects of his Kingdom, of Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, by receiving his Doctrines, embracing his Laws and Directions; and, by living up to them, keep Communication with the Head, and by shewing Submission to receive Favour and Protection from him. More especially those Laws of *Baptism*, the *Lord's Supper*, and *worshipping God through Christ*; which are fundamental to, and constitutive of, his *Mediatorial Kingdom*. And therefore all, who are thus subject in Spirit, and loyal in Heart unto *Christ*, may glory and comfort themselves with his Power. Since he is an Omnipotent King, can do all Things, and nothing can withstand his Will; and as he is a most tender, loving, and no less vigilant Ruler, and Defender of the Faith, to whom all Secrets are open and known; we may rest confident, That not the Gates of Hell, not that great Enemy of ours, Death; not the Malice of Devils; not the Conspiracies of the Powers of Darkness; nor all the persecuting Combinations upon Earth, can finally prevail to destroy his Church; though he may suffer it, for a time, to be afflicted; that in their Affliction his Servants may know him the better, and call upon him the more.

AND further, as a gracious King, he is always ready to send powerful Aid and Assistance

to

to every particular Subject, in their several Engagements with his, and their Enemies; and in his Might and Strength fighting with him, and for him, and for themselves, they will be more than common Conquerors: For to him that overcometh, will be grant to sit on his Throne, even as he himself overcame, and sat down on his Father's Throne¹. He rewards, as a King, those who faithfully serve and obey him: And as a King punishes, and cuts asunder the Rebellious and Unbelievers, who would not have him rule over them: And who can escape his Power, or abide his Wrath?



C H A P. XIV.

Of the Mediator as JUDGE.

THE Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed ALL JUDGMENT to the Son; That all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father². And it imports them so to do. For if the eternal Fate, and final Issue of all, who have the Knowledge of Christ, depends upon the Sentence of his Judgment, and our everlasting Destruction or Salvation will be then at his Disposal, it surely concerns every Christian to secure him, from whom they take their Name, for their Patron and Preserver at that Day, by that Respect and Duty which will engage him to

¹ Rev. iii. 21.

² John v. 22, 23.

be so; as much as it concerns us to secure the Favour of the Father, who gave us our Being, by that Honour and Obedience which are due to him.

Now if we are obliged to obey the Son in Thought, Word, and Deed, as much as the Father, the Will and Commandments of the Son, being the Will and Commandments of the Father, we of course must honour him, as well as we honour the Father; *Obedience*, in those Respects, being the best Testimony of an Inferior's honouring a Superior, who has Authority over him. But as God has made us *accountable* Creatures, and his Son in particular is to *take account* of all our Actions, Words, and Thoughts, and we know that to be the Appointment of the Father; the Command of honouring one, as well as the other, executes itself, and Obedience to it unavoidably follows; seeing we depend upon one for our last Stake, as much as the other; especially since dishonouring and disobeying the Son, is the same thing as dishonouring and disobeying the Father, who sent him into the World, (as it follows in the same *verse* sent him as his own Son) to become also the Son of Man.

AND this is another Instance of the Care and Wisdom of the Father, in making his Appointments, and laying his Commands in the Nature of Things, as being previously prepared, and capable of executing them. For if the Son was not Omniscient and Omnipresent by *Nature*, as he is the *Son of God*, how could he be capable of judging the World, supposing him to have Power given him for first raising all Men from the dead, whom he is to sit in Judgment upon?

How could he otherwise bring every secret Thought and Work into Judgment, or bring to light the hidden Things of Darkness, or manifest the Secrets of the Heart, and so judge every Man according to his Works? And, perhaps, every secret Sin of Penitents, though pardon'd and cancell'd, will be brought to Light, that the Mercy of pardoning may be as manifest before all the World, as the Knowledge in observing them. This will gall the Impenitent and the Hypocrite with Pangs of Sorrow, that their Behaviour and Devotion was not such before him, who seeth in secret, as to have their Sins revers'd; but must then be openly produced, only to their Condemnation: Tho' they then beseech him to deliver them by his Agony and bloody Sweat, by his Cross and Passion, by his precious Death and Burial, and by his glorious Resurrection and Ascension; He will not then be entreated; he is no longer their Mediator, but their JUDGE. Not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord, but he that doth the Will of his Father which is in Heaven, shall be admitted thither.

Then will secret Piety and Charity appear with great Joy, to be rewarded openly, and publicly, and plentifully, according to the Plenty they have sown. Then will all seeming Irregularities in Divine Providence be set to Rights, to the Satisfaction of all. The Oppressor will receive for the Wrongs he hath done, and, together with the Proud, shall be humbled down to Hell; whilst the humble, and the innocently oppress'd, shall be exalted to Heaven. Then will Rewards be proportion'd according to Degrees in Virtue, and sincere Improvements of Talents and Opportunities, without any Envy, or the least grudg-

ing at those, who came in at the eleventh Hour: Then will righteous, final Punishments be allotted according to evil Deeds, with a particular Discrimination of Woe and Suffering to deliberate *Unbelievers*, Rejectors of Christ and his Mediation, and to the Scoffers at his Salvation; for at that Day, it will be more *tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha*, than for them.

AND those are the *idle, profligate Words* in particular, (according to the subject Matter of the Place) the denying or deriding the great Doctrine of the Gospel, *Remission of Sins through the Mediator*, attested by the Father, and especially by the Miracles of the *Holy Ghost*, the imputing those attesting Miracles to another Spirit, or which is the same Thing, the impeaching that Doctrine, is the unpardonable Blasphemy against the *Holy Ghost*, and those *idle Words* which our Lord says will be brought to Account at the Day of Judgment; and their final Condemnation will be affected by them. *Mat. xii. 31, to 38.* And all the Believers, and publick Professors of Christ, whom they now deride, will then sit in Judgment upon them as Assessors with him, and Witnesses of unreasonable Obstinacy, or cowardly Denial of him. Then will all the World be cited before the Judgment-Seat of Christ; to give an Account, and to receive according to *what they have*, and not according to *what they have not*.

IT is said, the Father *bath given him Authority to execute Judgment, because he is the Son of Man*, i. e. because he was the true *Messias*, who was to come
Job. v. 27.

come in the Clouds of Heaven, (according to the Jews Expectation, and the Prophecy of Daniel², not at his first, as is their unhappy Mistake, but second Advent to judge the World) to whom all Power and Dominion is given. By becoming Son of Man, he suffer'd Death in our Nature, and so became ³ the Author of Salvation to all that obey him. Besides, in that Nature only, could he become a visible Judge unto Men, which is so necessary and proper to the Execution of that Authority. And God is said to judge the World in Righteousness by the Man Christ Jesus, whom he hath ordained⁴.

HENCE all human Nature have the Consolation, of having the Judge on their Side, related to them, and personally acquainted with the Frailties of Flesh, the Bowels of a Man joined to the infinite Goodness of God. And, therefore, when such Mercy and Goodness passes Sentence for our Transgressions, all Mouths must be stopped; we must join with him even in condemning ourselves; If the present, frequent, condemning ourselves does not prevent it, and produce timely Repentance. What can be so terrible to the Mind of Man, as the Solemnity, and Necessity of that Time, when we shall condemn ourselves everlastingly; and do so, as soon as ever we begin to see him, who once came riding on an Ass, coming in the Clouds of Heaven with Miriads of Angels, to take Vengeance on those who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Christ.

As to the certain Time and Season when that will be, that is wisely lock'd up from Man, as a useless, impertinent Knowledge to his Condition. For all his Use of Time and Season, who hath

D d 2

but

² John vii 13, 14. ³ Heb. v. 8, 9. ⁴ Act. xvii. 31.

but a short Time to live, is to be always ready. The uncertain Time of Death will certainly find us, and just as it finds us, remit us over to the Day of Judgment; and then what Good will the knowing that Day do us? The Hour of Death, and the Day of Judgment are so connected together, that he, who does not live in Preparation for one, will never be prepared for the other; and therefore an Excitement to that Preparation, as to any due Effect, is as well drawn from the uncertain near Approach of one, as of the other. And as to the practical Uses of Godliness will in all Ages be one and the same Motive.

AND as our Author takes Occasion to reflect upon the Apostles, and the Spirit by which they spake and wrote to the Churches, from their supposed Mistakes that the then Age, when they wrote, were the *tempora novissima*, the approaching *End of the World*, and the *last Days* of it, for three Pages together; and concludes his Reflections, in these Words: 'If most of the Apostles, upon what Motives soever, were mistaken in a Matter of this Consequence, how can we be absolutely certain, that any one of them may not be mistaken in any other Matter? If they were not inspired in what they said in their Writings concerning the then coming of Christ; how could they be inspir'd in those Arguments they build on a Foundation far from being so? And if they thought their Times were the last, no Direction they gave, could be intended to reach farther than their own Times.'

AND

AND he says, 'The best Commentators and Interpreters own, the Apostles were grossly mistaken,' as to these Matters. But in that he is grossly mistaken: For the latest and best, as Dr. *Whitby* copying from the antientest of all, is of another Sentiment: To whom I refer the Reader, who will find *Grotius's* dangerous Opinion (the Opinion probably our Author builds upon) confuted, as to this Matter. *Vid. Whitby Heb. ix. 26. 1 Thef. iv. 15. 1 Cor. x. 11. and particularly Phil. iv. 5. The Lord's being at Hand,* and the near Approach of the Son of Man, at the Time of the Apostles Writings, to the Destruction of *Jerusalem* solves the Meaning of those Phrases, and other Peoples Mistakes about them, as clearly and confessedly, as the Destruction of *Jerusalem* is acknowledged to be an *Emblem* of the general Judgment.

IT is agreed by all, that the *last Days* so often mentioned, *the Close of the Ages*, or as we translate *οὐρανὸν τῶν αἰώνων*, *the End of the World*, *Heb. ix. 26.* mean the Days of the prophecy'd *Messias*, the *Christian Age*, and comprehend all that Duration of Time from his first, to his second coming to Judgment. And the *Fulness of Time* at his first Advent, may probably be meant the full *Half*, or Medium of Time, of the *World's* Duration; according to that of the *Prophet*, *O Lord, revive thy Work in the Midst of the Years, in the Midst of the Years make known, in Wrath remember Mercy!* If the *Work* there may be

¹ *Hab. iii. 2.* 1. Opus Dei per excellentiam vocat statum electi populi sive ecclesiae, quam agnosci vult Deus tanquam singulare opificium & specimen præcipuum suæ virtutis, sapientiae,

be admitted to signify the *Redemption* of the World; then, as there were four Thousand Years of the first Days before the first coming of Christ, from that to his *second* coming there will remain to be reckon'd four Thousand Years, of *the last Days*. And this abates the Outcry of our Author^s, 'Of God's having left all Mankind for four Thousand Years together, destitute of sufficient Means to do their Duty: 'For if the Middle of the World's Period was the *Fitness* of Time for his Appearance, and the Benefit of his Redemption extended equally backward, as it does forward, there is no Sense in his Exclamation.

AND if the great Comet that appear'd 1680, whose periodical Return is 575 Years, will, indeed, be the Instrument under God for bringing on the great *καταστροφή* Conflagration, or Renovation by Fire, it is easy to compute, was there any just Augury in such Things, how many Revolutions are wanting to compleat such a suppos'd *Catastrophe* of this Globe, and the Inhabiters thereof,

Ecce ogdoadem illam mysticam tot prophetarum oraculis decantatam, perfectum numerum & plenarium, in quo omnis mysterii plenitudo continetur:

But let this pass, as an incidental Conjecture, in a Case, wherein there can be no Certainty in any human Scheme whatsoever.

tie, justitiæ, bonitatis. Vel 2. Conservationem populi Dei. Vel 3. Redemptionem Judæorum. Vel 4. Allegorice redemptionem totius generis humani, Opus Magnum Incarnationis. Pool Synopl. Crit.

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